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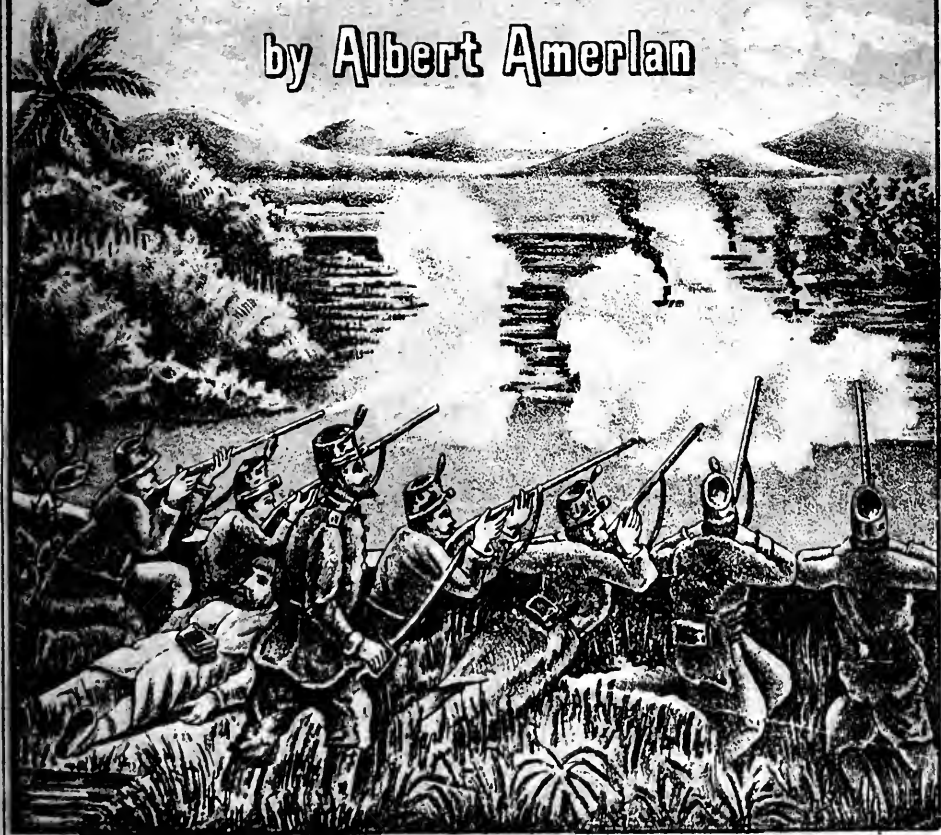
NIGHTS

on the

RIO PARAGUAY

Scenes of War and Charactersketches

by Albert Amerlan



University of California, Los Angeles



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Nights on the Rio Paraguay

SCENES OF WAR AND CHARACTERSCETCHES

BY

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Translated from the German

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A SHORT REVIEW BY THE TRANSLATOR.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	7
A LONELY MAN.....	11
AFTER THE DEATH OF THE DICTATOR.....	21
THE MARSHAL-PRESIDENT.....	26
TUYUTY.....	37
CURUZÚ.....	49
THE THITHE OF THE TENTH.....	56
THE CONFERENCE.....	62
WITH THE OUTPOSTS.....	73
CURUPAITI.....	79
CESSATION OF OPERATION.....	87
THE SURPRISE.....	94
THE ALAGOAS.....	104
THE «BOGARANTES».....	109
THE LAGUNA ACAYUNASA.....	112
IN THE CAMP OF A TYRANT.....	119
THE LOMAS ITA-YVATÉ AND CUMBARITY.....	131
IN THE SIEBRA MBONAYPEY.....	141
ON THE AQUIDABANIGUY.....	148
CONCLUSION.....	156

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A short Review by the Translator.

The tragic fate of a brave people, battling heroically for their existence against great odds, but suffering annihilation through internal and external causes, will always challenge the attention, sympathy and admiration of the whole world. Such a spectacle is furnished us in the almost complete extermination of the Guaranis in Paraguay in their war with the combined armies of the Argentine Republic, Brazil and Uruguay from 1865 to 1870.

The history of the aborigines of America, since the advent of Columbus, is one continuous, doleful chronicle of the destruction of an, in many respects, noble race, by the resistless advance of invading and conquering nations. The noonday of the native American race, the day of its strength, vigor and progress, belongs to the distant, prehistoric past. It had grown old, feeble, fossilized, unprogressive and stagnant when Europeans discovered the new continent. Old age had come over the race and it had lost all capacity to adapt itself to the new conditions and to join the advancing hosts of progress and civilization. It was doomed to perish in accordance with the severe but immutable laws of nature, by which everything which has grown old and has outlived its usefulness, must be destroyed and removed, to make room for that which is younger, stronger and better suited to the new, prevailing conditions.

This downfall of hardy, noble, warlike but petrified and unprogressive tribes and nations before the uninterrupted assaults of the aggressive and progressive invaders fills many

highly interesting and instructive pages of American history during the last four centuries. A whole race, counted by millions, and peopling the two continents from Cape Horn to beyond the Arctic circle, has been almost wiped out of existence in that brief time. The conquests of Mexico and Peru and the ceaseless wars along the ever expanding frontiers of white settlements furnish chapters full of episodes of romantic interest, bold adventure, courageous endurance, stubborn resistance, intrepid and heroic self-sacrifice noble love of home and race and stoic indifference to pain and death. They also furnish valuable lessons to mankind. They teach us that the final decay of decrepit old age awaits all nations and races sooner or later and that culture and civilization demand that nations grown old and feeble will be accorded the kind and considerate treatment which christian and civilized people extend to the aged at their homes.

The extermination of the Guaranis, in these last days of the Indian, is an episode, unique in its kind and of surpassing value as an ethnical study. In all the other wars and conflicts the Indian opposed his aboriginal methods, manners, institutions and culture to those of the invading conquerors. It was a test of strength between an ancient and a modern civilization, and the old went down. With the Guaraní it was different. They were, what was called, civilized and christianized Indians. They had abandoned the old gods, habits, customs and institutions of their fathers and had adopted in their stead those of their white tutors and conquerors. They had been docile pupils of foreign masters for three centuries.

Did European civilization penetrate deep into the nature of the Guaraní? Did the religion of Christ, as taught by the missionaries, leaven and modify his mental and moral character? Did he absorb, digest and assimilate Arian civilization to make it his own? What fruit did the foreign graft on the native stock produce? Was the reformation wrought, superficial or radical, beneficial or otherwise? These questions arise and are partly answered by a perusal of Guaraní history. Kindred questions are asked throughout all America by statesmen and philanthropists when confronted by the Indian problem. The answer is, that the nature of the Indians cannot be eradicated, that the adoption of foreign institutions, forms and man-

ners is only a superficial varnish, and that the essential and fundamental traits of his character, for good or for evil, remain fixed and unchangeable. The Guarani must be considered as an Indian dressed in the garb of civilization.

Paraguay was discovered by Sebastian Cabot in the year 1530. The city of Asuncion was founded in 1536 and the first bishopric established in 1555. The labors of the missionaries were crowned with uncommon success from the beginning. The Jesuits obtained exclusive dominion over the land in 1690 and other organizations were forbidden to enter the territory. They instituted and organized an almost independent theocratic government. Thirty missions flourished in the country at the middle of the 17th century and the number of christianized and civilized Guaranis in 1740 was estimated at 140,000. The country was hermetically sealed against all foreign influence except what came through Jesuit channels.

The missions were all built on the uniform plan then ruling throughout all Spanish America. A large plaza formed the centre and around it were erected the church, the college or school, the arsenal, the stores and the workshops of the artisans. The priests exercised control and supervision over all. Religious ceremonies were performed daily. The day opened with prayers by the children. Mass, at which the whole population attended, followed at sunrise. Baptisms took place in the afternoon. Vespers were sung every evening and holidays were selected for the celebration of marriages. Much time was devoted to musical instruction, and the Guaranis manifested considerable talent as musicians and singers. All dressed in garments woven of native cotton. The men wore shirts and short trousers, and the women were attired in caps and loose gowns. Schools and workshops were admirably managed and the skill of some artisans, especially of the wood-carvers, was of a high order. Military drill, once a week, was obligatory and prizes were awarded to the best marksmen. The use of the Spanish language was prohibited and many works in the language of the Guarani issued from the printing presses. Agriculture, horticulture, gardening and stock raising were fostered. We have no reliable statistics of the more remote times, but in 1863, the country having continued in well nigh complete isolation, 300,000 head of cattle roamed over the plains

and there were in cultivation 240 acres of maize, 440,000 of mandioca, 75,000 of beans, 32,000 of cotton, 23,000 of tobacco 25,000 of sugar cane, 11,000 of pea nuts and 34,000 of rice and vegetables. Such, in outline, is the picture of Guarani life under the dominion of Jesuits and a few Spaniards, as it presented itself for three hundred years.

The Jesuits were expelled from the country by the Spanish Government in 1767. Their works fell to pieces and the culture of the Guarani experienced a sudden relapse. The aborigines drifted back toward their old barbarism the moment external incentive, support and authority were withdrawn. A kind of anarchy supervened. The population at the missions had dwindled down to 44,000 in 1801, a loss of over two thirds in one third of a century, ruin spread everywhere and decay succeeded to the former prosperity.

The appearance of the Dictator Dr. Francis, in the early part of the present century, infused new life again into the declining people. The Guaranis, once more became a contented, industrious and prosperous people, in their slow peculiar way, under the firm and able reigns of the Dictator Francis and Lopez, father and son. Autocracy, a strong personal rule, whether exercised by priests, soldiers or civilians, was evidently the form of government best suited to the Indian character. He had never risen above archaic patriarchal form. Democracy was absolutely foreign to him, He had no conception nor desire of civil and personal liberty as understood by the Arians. He looked upon his ruler, especially if that ruler belonged to a foreign and superior race, as a father, unrestrained in authority, unlimited in power, moved by a strong anxiety for the welfare of his people and as being mysteriously endowed with supernatural insight, wisdom and force. To such a being, it was but natural for the Guarani to yield unquestioning, absolute obedience and submission. The acts of violence committed by priests and dictators he accepted with stoic, unperturbed equanimity as the decree of the godhead. Thus the Guaranis prospered and were contented under the firm, generally just, but often violent and cruel rule of priests and dictators and would have continued to flourish if the younger Lopez had not provoked that disastrous war in 1865 which was to involve the whole nation in ruin.

The population of Paraguay at that time was estimated at 440,000, mostly Guaranis and some half-breeds. Guarani was the dominant language and a few hundreds of whites, of Spanish descent, formed the governing class. The war, of five years duration, destroyed one half of the inhabitants. The census of 1873, taken three years after the war, showed a total population of 221,079, of which only 28,746 were males, 106,254 females over 15 years of age and 86,079 children of both sexes under 15 years. Not less than 170,000 males and 50,000 females perished in battle or from disease, exposure, privation and starvation.

The Dictator Francisco Solano Lopez was the central figure in the bloody drama. He was a man filled with a vaulting ambition and uncommonly endowed with clear insight, cool calculation, indomitable perseverance, military talent and full of resources in critical moments. He was also cowardly and just, suspicious, haughty, immoral and cruel. A character full of strange lights and dark shades. Such a man can only be understood in his proper setting, in his natural environment. A career, like that of Lopez, was only possible in Paraguay. By nature and by training these quiet, humble docile people believed in a sort of divine right attaching to their governor. His acts of violence and cruelty, which, anywhere else, would have produced resentment and revolution, were submitted to with dull resignation. In their eyes he was an almost supernatural being, and at his behest, as long as he defended the independence of his nation and country, they were willing to sacrifice all their worldly possessions and shed their last drops of blood. Whatever else might be said against Lopez, he remained true and loyal to his people and country to the very last. This virtue, the natural gift to command and the awe with which the Guaranis had been taught to regard their rulers must explain the fact that this peaceful, harmless people followed the dictator into a war against more than fifteen times their number, and through defeat after defeat, through untold suffering stood loyally and faithfully by him until there was scarcely a man left in Paraguay, able to bear arms.

The author of this book gives a graphic and highly interesting description of the events and scenes on the battlefields and in the camp. The narrative bears the stamp of truth. The

leading characters are well drawn. The cruel fate of a brave, gentle, obedient, trusting people being led to the slaughter by an ambitious tyrant, is well sketched in these pages. The author gives us glimpses into the domestic and public life and the character of the Guaranis. The dual nature, the unchangeable, fossilized, real Indian character varnished over by a thin coating of superficial culture and civilization, crops out everywhere. The native character of the Guaranis combined with the work of priests and foreign dictators, logically led to the tragic end of the nation. The work is a valuable contribution to modern literature on kindred subjects. It is intensely interesting and highly instructive at a time, when the Arian races, and especially the Anglo-Saxons, are conquering the world and subjecting to their rule so many nations and races of various types and in all stages of development, from infancy to extreme old age. The problem, how best to govern these savage, or semi-barbarian people in different parts of the globe, presents itself continuously to the statesmen. Individual and national character of the conquered must receive due consideration or else the work will end in failure. Any work, therefore, which like the present, throws light on the character of the subject races, be they Indian, Negro, Mongolian, Hindoo or Malay, so that their government can be made more firm, stable and beneficent, must be of inestimable value to the conquering races. This book, for this reason, has been translated and is now made accessible to the English speaking public.

H. F. S.



Introduction.

The remembrance of the calm, moonlight nights, which, ten years ago, I spent on the forest-fringed banks of the Rio Paraguay, one of the stateliest of the rivers of South America, will always remain indelibly impressed upon my soul.

Every evening, toward 11 o'clock, at a place where a mighty Arahan spread its branches, laden with delicious fruit, over the edge of the steep bank, I descended to the narrow strip of shore, some fifty feet below, to disrobe and to refresh and cool my heated body in the transparent flood.

I resided at that time in Humaità, the former fortress of Paraguay, consisting then only of a few dilapidated brick buildings and the church, partially destroyed by the shells of the Brazilian fleet. This Humaità was for a long time the «*noli me tangere*» of the allied Brazilian, Argentine and Oriental armies until starvation forced the Paraguayan garrison to evacuate the fortress secretly on the night of the 25th and 26th of July 1868, but not to surrender it to the enemy.

Now the sanguinary war, which had lasted five long and weary years, was ended. Paraguay was desolated. Its male population, with the exception of several thousands of cripples and released prisoners of war, was exterminated and the prosperity of the country utterly ruined.

Three years of warfare have brought untold woe and misery over this severely tried, once flourishing land, and destroyed, for years to come, its budding and blossoming prosperity.

Poverty, want and corruption now reign, where formerly a happy and contented nation lived under peculiar institutions and under a government adapted to its simple conditions and to which it rendered blind, unquestioning and unconditional obedience.

Outcasts, tramps and adventurers corrupted with vices, the scum of humanity, such as in other countries too, follow in the wake of large armies, remained here after the termination of

the war, to appropriate to themselves the estates of the perished Guaranis and to console the hundreds of thousands of bereaved widows and maidens, over their losses.

The gloomy demon of crime yet spreads its ominous wings over this richly endowed land and the wretched remnant of its indigenous inhabitants.

One evening, walking as customary to the river, I crossed the wide, grass-grown field, covered with scattering trees and surrounded by crumbling walls and breastworks, which, with some decaying, tottering residences, constituted the former fortress Humaitá.

The air was cool and refreshing and the moon, like a silver clasp on the glimmering star-spangled mantle covering the dark-blue nocturnal heavens, illuminated shore and stream with a soft, mellow light.

Leaning against the trunk of the wide-branching Arahan, I contemplated the landscape, a strange combination of peace and destruction, of a happy abandon and inconsolable despair such as only afflict the human heart.

What an abundance of contrasts!

Peace? Yes, peace ruled everywhere. Peace hovered over the shimmering surface of the stream as well as over the dark gigantic trees on the opposite or Gran Chaco bank, which dipped their branches deep into the cooling flood for new strength to their apparently inexhaustible vital force.

Destruction? It too surrounded me wherever I gazed. A hundred paces to the right frowned the ruins of the once proud, covered battery «Londres» and at about the same distance to the left remained the wreck of another formidable battery. These, as well as all the other batteries, were completely destroyed and razed to the ground as soon as the allies took possession of the fortress. The debris of strong walls, scattered far and wide, gave evidence of the fact that the control over his own stream had passed away from the Paraguayan forever.

Happy abandon? A group of young, laughing and chattering Guarani maidens ascended the steep narrow path from the river to the plateau above. Each one carried on her head a round basket filled with clothes. Jestingly they passed along, dressed in the peculiar costume of the country, consisting

only of a long cotton robe whose whiteness contrasted markedly with the dark skin. The long, dark hair hung loosely over the uncovered shoulders. The black eyes glittered and the full, round lips laughed and chatted cheerfully and unconcerned about the inexpressible distress and misery into which the unfortunate war had thrown them and their country.

Inconsolable despair, which afflicts only the human heart? Yonder, near the ancient, low, military hospital, stand several rows of tents, occupied by a battalion of Argentine infantry which garrisons the place, for, notwithstanding the prevailing peace, Paragnay is yet held by a portion of the allied army. When I passed the place a few moments ago, I noticed a single tent a short distance away from the others. A sentinel, facing its entrance, stood before the tent. A dozen soldiers, with side-arms squatted on the grass. A tallow candle, fixed into the neck of a bottle, emitted a faint light by which I was enabled to cast a glance into the interior of the tent. It revealed to me a sight of the most hopeless despair which can afflict a human heart. A pale man, clad only in a shirt and military trousers, knelt with folded hands before a priest, who, as if blessing him, laid both his hands on the head of the perishing man. Perishing? Yes, it was a dying man, whom the priest had just granted absolution. A perishing man, doomed to suffer, in full consciousness, the death struggle during eight long, mortal hours, before the four fatal bullets from his comrades would bring him eternal peace, the next morning in front of his battalion. And the heart of this pale man was wrung to pieces by the thought of his loved ones at home, who had no premonition of the harsh, irrevocable fate which had overtaken him. I heard the outcry of extreme anguish, an outcry torn from a human breast by the thought: «how will the heart of my aged mother, who loved me so inexpressibly, be torn into shreds, when she learns the bloody end of her only son?»—O, misery incomprehensible to the human soul.

Moved by gloomy reflections I descended to the river where the softly murmuring waves lapped the beach.

No one was visible along the bank. Slowly I undressed. The stream cosily kissed my naked feet. I did not yet comprehend its language. My heart was filled with a strange sensation.

An indescribable, illimitable peace, which permeated me to the depth of my soul, spread over all nature.

Now and then only, a lonely waterfowl raised its voice. At intervals, from the dense woods of the Gran Chaco, scarcely six hundred paces away, came the roar of the jaguar, seeking its mate. Occasionally, faintly audible, could be heard the swish and splash of the waves caused by the movements of the alligator, which, zealously hunted and pursued by the soldiers with gun and spear, is very timid in these waters. These brutes are not dangerous now. They dare not venture near a swimming person.

The monotonous murmurs of the waves, the refreshing exhalations of the water and the soft, warm current of balmy air affected me strangely on that charming night as I stood on the brink of the river, whose surface mirrored the moon and the sparkling stars.

The soft lullaby of the waves rocked me into a state of semi-conscious slumber, I fancied I heard words whispered in my ear :

«I will tell you tales, true tales of events, which, in the course of time happened on my banks. Give me your attention, and if you desire so, you may narrate them to your countrymen.»

It was the Rio who thus addressed me in a manner of secrecy. Seated on the sand, the back resting against the baranca and the feet extending toward the river, I listened in wrapt attention, to the narratives of the Rio. They were strange, marvelous, but not phantastic tales, bearing the stamp of truth and, as a rule, treating of occurrences in the history of Paraguay.

The stream must have babbled long, for, when it ceased of a sudden and woke me out of my semi-conscious dream, the moon had crossed half the celestial arch and now peered through the tree tops on the opposite bank.

With my head full of the curious things, which I had heard, I arose to return home and seek my hammock.

Night after night I descended to the river. It then told me of events which it and its tributaries had witnessed. For

years I was prevented from recording them, but now I will make good what has been neglected so long and publish a few of the tales as told to me by the Rio.



A lonely Man

The capital of Paraguay, during the month of June and July with their cold, monotonous rains, unceasing for days, with the grayish, gloomy, musky atmosphere obstructing the few views over the river and park-like surroundings makes to-day even, a melancholic impression on the visitor. Such was the case, but in a much higher degree forty or fifty years ago.

The streets, in marked contrast to those of other South American cities, were laid out irregularly and crossed each other, as they do to-day, in all directions. They were almost impassable for pedestrians during the rainy season when they formed a chain of miry lagunes through which the horses of equestrians found their way with difficulty.

There were no paved side-walks in front of the low, one-story houses covered with tiles or palm leaves. A number of them were ornamented with wooden verandahs.

Gardens in which plane-trees, orange-trees, palms and pine apples grew luxuriously adjoined the residences here and there. The bright or dark green color of the foliage contrasted charmingly with the golden fruit peeping out of the branches.

The desolated and delapidated Cathedral, which had been erected in 1555 by Martinez Domingo de Yrala, and which had once had been the most imposing structure in the capital, presented an aspect truly distressing. Ever since the declaration of independence from Spanish rule and ever since Dr. Francia, elected dictator for life by the people, governed the

land with a hand of iron, were the Cathedral and most of the other churches suffered to decay. Their treasures were confiscated for the benefit of the public treasury, and only a small number were maintained in a condition fit for public worship.



Orange Grove near Asuncion.

The worship which was permitted by the dictator in the few remaining churches was reformed radically. The authority of the Pope was repudiated by the Catholic Paraguayans after the venerable bishop of the country had ended his life in prison. Dr. Francia, as the vice-gerente of the Almighty, ruled within the boundaries of the republic, and in this capacity, reformed the service, eliminated nearly all the feast-days from the calendar and permitted only a few to be observed. He established a new ritual, formulated new prayers and prescribed to the few remaining priests what and how they could preach and what to pass by in silence. The death penalty followed a violation of this decree, and as the priests were well aware of the ubiquity of the dictators spies they were careful not to provoke the ire of their Lord by the contents of their plain sermons.

One side of the plaza and on the corner of a street opening therein stood a spacious one-story building. A wooden

portico, with pyramids of muskets stacked on the brick-paved floor and sentinels walking to and fro, adorned the front.

Over the main entrance was fastened the escutcheon of the republic, consisting of a white shield surrounded with laurel and palm branches, a golden star in the centre and the device: «*Republica del Paraguay—Paz y Justicia.*» (Republic of Paraguay—Peace and Justice.)

Entering the interior of this building, looked upon by all Paraguayans with holy dread and awe, and which was at once the seat of government and the residence of the dictator, one passed into a square, brick-paved court, surrounded on all sides by wooden porticoes, under which, engaged in whispering conversation, lounged the body-guard, a hundred strong. The officers, in their red uniforms, stood serious and silent at the entrance to the guard room. No comrade chatted with another. Each one smoked his *cigarillo de chala* (cigarettes wrapped in the leaves of maize) and seemed utterly oblivious to everything except the behavior of his subordinates.

Above a door to the right, next to the guardroom and leading from the court into the interior, appeared the following inscription: «*Départamento de Policía, Justicia, Culto e Instrucción pública*» (Depart. of Police, Justice, Public Worship and Public Instructions.) The white-washed room contained only a few chairs and a long table placed in the centre. Two gentlemen, dressed as civilians, sat behind the table. They were secretaries, without doubt, as indicated by several sheets of paper, inkstands and pens placed before them, although it seemed as if neither were made use of. Of books, documents, files of papers, which, naturally, might be expected at such a place, not a trace could be observed.

A side-door connected this room with the one adjoining which, in its arrangements was the exact counterpart of the first. It was the *Departamento militar* and to this the *Departamento del Interior* and the *Departamento de Hacienda*, (Treasury Department), followed in a similar manner. All these rooms presented the same aspect,—a few chairs, a long table with writing utensils and behind it two idle, silent secretaries.

The whole building possessed an air of weirdness and it was but natural that the people of the capital cast upon it a

timid glance as they passed and were only too glad if they were not compelled to enter within.

The apartment adjoining the *Departamento de Hacienda* was used as the ante-chamber to the residence of the dictator. Several dozen clumsy leather-covered chairs were ranged along the walls and in front of them an officer in the uniform of a major of infantry, the adjutant on duty, paced noiselessly up and down the room. The only other occupant was an old Indian with silvery hair and mustache and dressed in blue cotton trousers and an old black cloth coat, who sat upon his chair as immovable as a statue. He was the body servant of the Supremo and the only person trusted by him.

De Francia's residence consisted of only one large, very plainly furnished room. Near the wall, opposite the entrance stood a narrow book-case of cedar wood, containing a small but select library, in which the works of Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot and the French Encyclopedists could be noticed. Physical instruments, such as an electrical machine, Leyden jars, air pump, magnets, concave mirror, sextants, a telescope, a terrestrial and a celestial globe were arranged on a table near the book-case. A skeleton grinned from a corner and the walls were covered with maps and written tables of statistics. To the right of the door, over which fell the heavy folds of a dark, woolen blanket, stood a plain wooden couch, the bed of the tenant of this apartment. A writing desk in the centre, a large table covered with stacks of written documents and a few wooden chairs and a mat of rushes covering the floor, completed the furniture of the room.

At the writing desk sat an aged person of medium size, and with snow-white locks. He was busily engaged in writing. A long gown of black cloth, which, apparently had seen service for many years, hung slovenly around the lean body. A grayish handkerchief was tied around the neck. Near the desk stood a brasier filled with live coal to radiate some warmth in the damp and chilly room.

The rain beating against the windows and the scratching of the pen flying restless across the paper were the only audible noises in the gloomy apartment.

The old man, after he had written for some time, arose and, with hands folded behind, walked slowly up and down the room.

Now we have an opportunity to observe the man closely. His features were cold and severe, the lips compressed, the chin prominent and from beneath the bushy, silvery brows, a pair of dark eyes looked hard and loveless but with an expression of iron determination upon the world.

This frail old man, on whose strong countenance was stamped contempt of humanity and pitiless severity, had already passed his eightieth year and for the last twenty-four years had exercised an unlimited power over his country such as perhaps no Oriental despot ever enjoyed over his enslaved people.

This was Dr. José Gaspar de Francia, by resolution of Congress of May 1st 1816, elected dictator for life, with absolute and unlimited power.

The only condition or duty imposed upon him was: to maintain the independence of the republic at all hazards. This he has done. But at what sacrifices? At the cost of all freedom, civil and personal, of institutions and of individuals.

«Peace and Justice» the device of the republic were also maintained by him.

Interminable civil wars had raged in all the South American states for the last thirty years. Anarchy ruled everywhere and the soil was drenched with blood. In Paraguay alone, under Dr. Francia's dictatorship, not even the faintest attempt at open rebellion against the existing government had been made. Blood, indeed, had flown here too, but only in the execution of justice and in vindication of law, as directed by the Supremo who combined in his person the sole executive and legislative power.

He was never accused of acts of injustice, even by his bitterest and most relentless foes, but was charged with cruel severity in the punishment of the guilty and the suspected, especially of those charged with political crimes. It is quite probable that of the latter, many, who were innocent, had to suffer the death penalty. It was one of his leading principles to have a prompt, brief trial and a speedy execution follow swiftly on the heel of the crime committed.

Terror was the aim of all punishment.

Punishment consisted of four degrees or classes, namely, imprisonment, whipping, public penal labor in heavy iron *grillos* (chains for the feet), and death by the bullet.

Local judges, of which one was appointed for each one of the forty-one districts into which the republic was divided, had jurisdiction of all minor offences and adjudged them in accordance with the plain, simple code written by Dr. Francia. Political offences and all the greater crimes and misdemeanors were tried by the dictator himself.

The people were very industrious and orderly. M. Grandsire, a Frenchman, who went to Paraguay to secure the release of his countryman Bonplant, who had been imprisoned by Dr. Francia, wrote to Alexander von Humboldt in 1824, among other things, as follows :

«The inhabitants of Paraguay enjoy a happy peace under a good administration. The contrast with the countries, through which I have travelled is striking. One can journey through Paraguay without weapons of any kind. The doors are rarely locked. There are no beggars and all the people work.»

This judgment of the French traveller is no exaggeration. Crimes against person or property were extremely rare. Idlers and vagabonds were compelled to work and tradesmen, and dealers, for furnishing articles of inferior quality, were severely punished,

José Gaspar de Francia was born A.D. 1757 in the district of Yaguaron, ten leguas to the south-east of Asuncion, where his father, Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia filled the office of intendant of an extensive tobacco plantation, established by the Spanish Government.

It was intended at first to make a theologian of young José Gaspar. The church at time offered the most promising career to obtain influence and honor and he was sent to the then famous university of Cordoba which was controlled by the Franciscans. The theology of these monks did not suit the cold, critical nature of his mind and he turned to the study of law and the exact sciences, particularly to mathematics and physics. He returned to Asuncion after having passed his examination, commenced the practice of law and led a quiet modest and unostentatious life.

Occupying his leisure hours with the study of his favorite sciences and with experiments in physics and having his rooms well filled with books, instruments and apparatus, he soon, and

justly so, aquired the reputation of possessing great erudition. True, in general learning he had not his equal in Paraguay.

His studies and his experiences of life led him to a contempt of his fellowmen, to a cold, publicly acknowledged deism and to a gloomy, loveless view of the world in general. He recognized in the unchangeable laws of nature the only forces by which the universe is governed.

In this manner lived Dr. Francia until his fifty-fourth year, retired from the world and respected by everyone for his learning and for the wise, faithful administration of the affairs entrusted to him.

Then came the year A.D. 1811. All the other Spanish colonies of South America had already declared their independence of the mother country. The creoles, everywhere, had resorted to arms to secure their liberty.

It was different in Paraguay

Here everything was peaceful and calm until the Commander Pedro Juan Caballero, on the 14th and 15th of March of the same year, inaugurated a peaceable revolution without the discharge of a gun and without the loss of a drop of blood but which, nevertheless, terminated forever Spanish dominiofn in this country.



The Harbcur of Asuncion.

A general convention of the people met on the 20th of June following and instituted a provisional government consisting of four members, one of whom was the lawyer Dr. José Gaspar Francia.

A general Congress, composed of one thousand members, and called together at the instigation of Dr. Francia, convened two years thereafter in order to deliberate upon the formation of a new government, which should offer greater guaranties for the maintenance of national independence than the present. A constitution, drafted and submitted by Dr. Francia, was unanimously adopted and on the 1st day of October A.D. 1813, in compliance with its provisions, the two citizens, Fulgencio Jégros and Dr. José Gaspar Francia were elected consuls.

The latter soon managed to concentrate all the functions of the new government into his hands. He retired to his modest dwelling whenever his colleague opposed him, being certain that he would be recalled promptly and that he would have his way. This state of affairs did not satisfy him, and when Congress, whose members had been elected through his influence, met in the month of October of the following year, he managed to convince them that an executive endowed with greater authority and power was a necessity. The consular government, accordingly was abolished and Dr. Francia was appointed Dictator for the term of five years. The next Congress, convened on May 1st 1816 elected him Dictator for life.

He had now reached the goal for which he had striven. He enjoyed an authority such as was not possessed by any emperor or king in Europe.

In the whole land there existed only one word and one will which must be obeyed implicitly, and that word and that will were his.

Woe to him who, even within the narrow circle of his family, had the audacity to criticise an act or a decree of the regent ! His life was forfeited and he breathed his last on the sandy plain before the muzzles of muskets.

Francia was a despot in the strongest sense of the word, but he was as severe and rigorous to himself as to his subjects. Withdrawn from all social intercourse with the world he led a simple and modest life.

His meals were frugal, consisting of soup and boiled meat with which he drank a glass of «chicha» (a refreshing fermented liquor prepared from pineapple syrup and water.) He never indulged to excess in eating and drinking, nor would he permit the least luxury in his dress and in his residence. He was an uncompromising foe to any kind of dissipation. ♣

With an iron determination and filled with an unquenchable appetite for work, which seemed to increase with the advancing years, he governed the land without any assistance. He had no ministers or secretaries to formulate his decrees, but he had only eight clerks, two for each department, who were only required to copy his work, his orders, and to forward the same to the chiefs of the districts or to the commanders of the different detachments of the troops.

The land was divided into forty-one districts. A chief or «mayordomo» as he was called, was placed over each and it was his duty to collect the taxes, which consisted in the tithe of the crops and the new increase of the herds, to keep the accounts of the expenses of the government, to manage the recruiting and to provide and forward the necessary number of laborers for the public works, such as the construction of canals and highways.

Neither the soldiers nor the laborers employed at public works were paid wages but were supplied with rations. The soldiers were supplied with uniforms consisting of a red flannel shirt and a leather cap. Boots or shoes were only worn by the officers.

A judge, a priest and a teacher, beside the «mayordomo» existed in each district.

Francia was an outspoken, determined foe of any and all religion. He considered Christianity as useless and even injurious to the people. For this reason he rendered difficult the education of new priests, favored the abolition of ecclesiastical marriages, confiscated the property of the church for the benefit of the state and at the beginning of his rule, closed all the convents under the pretence that the country would not tolerate idleness.

Attendance at school was compulsory for children from 6 to 10 years of age. They were only taught reading, arithmetic and writing, as that was deemed sufficient by the Supremo.

All the other domains of knowledge were closed to the young Paraguayans. No higher institution of learning existed in the land. No one, neither native nor foreigner, was permitted to leave the country during the dictatorship of Francia.

He increased the regular army to a strength of 14,000 men. It was distributed in little forts along the frontiers and its main object was to guard the boundaries so effectively that the isolation of Paraguay from the rest of the world was complete.

A few persons of unquestioned loyalty were permitted to carry on commerce with foreign countries through the port of Itapua on the upper Parana, but they had to pay a high price for this privilege.

All the other ports and harbors of the republic were absolutely closed to foreign trade.

Foreign ambassadors and consuls were not permitted to enter the country and no note or communication from any foreign power to the dictator, was ever answered.

The absence of steam vessels from the European and American navies of that day, and the geographical position of the republic permitted such conduct by Francia. To-day it would be impossible.

The dictator never amassed a fortune either for himself or for a favorite. Of the latter he had none as he was unapproachable to all except his adjutants and his faithful old servant, who were the only person who had access to him. He detested flattery and obsequiousness intensely and punished with great rigor every act of injustice done by «mayordomos» and judges.

The guilty trembled. They knew that punishment was unavoidable, and that the hoary regent never exercised mercy.

Agriculture and stock raising were promoted by suitable regulations and industry and handicraft were improved. Internal trade was free and open to every citizen but the foreign trade was reduced to almost nothing.

It was his object to found a state in Paraguay which should be independent of foreign countries, depend entirely upon itself, remain cut off from all intercourse with other nations and yet become prosperous and full of vitality and whose

citizens should see in it the realization of their highest ideal in whose defence they would be ready at any moment to shed their last drop of blood.

The dictator was finally looked upon by the Paraguayans as a being of a superior nature. He absorbed all the functions and organs of the government :—police, justice, finance, war etc. Francia conducted everything himself as it best suited him and no one in all Paraguay had the least conception of the organization and mechanism and details of the government as it was managed.

This truly remarkable man ruled Paraguay like an autocrat for twenty-seven years. It is almost impossible to render a fair and intelligent verdict on his conduct of affairs and the principles which guided him as he left no writings, documents, memoranda etc. behind upon which to base a judgment.

The plain, reserved man, died as he had lived, a lonely recluse, his death (of dropsy) taking place on September 10th 1840. His nation, suddenly deprived of a governor and a government, became the sole heir to his insignificant estate.

Yet, for many years after his death, the peasant in his hut, with mortal dread and bowing reverentially, ventured to pronounce, in whisper only, the name of the departed Supremo, fearing that the spirit of that potent man might rise from the grave to rebuke and call to account the irreverent. Never will the dictator Dr. José Gaspar Francia and his rule be forgotten in Paraguay. He will live in the memory of generation after generation as a being of supernatural endowment to be contemplated with awe and whose acts may be admired but cannot be criticized.



After the Death of the Dictator.



When on the 10th day of September 1840, Dr. Francia, then eighty three years of age, passed away, he left the Republic of Paraguay without a government of any kind whatever.

No citizen had the least idea of the state of public affairs and how to conduct the government, since the autocrat had concentrated in his hands all the functions of the executive, legislative and executive branches. No one knew what to do.

Five citizens, it is true, combined at once to form a junta in an arbitrary manner and without consent of the people, to assume the highest authority and to grasp the heritage of Francia.

This attempt was frustrated by the army which had always enjoyed particular favors at the hand of the Dictator. Coronel Mariano Roque Alonso dissolved the junta without striking a blow, appointed Carlos Antonio Lopez, a prominent landowner, as his secretary and jointly with him formed a provisional government which made arrangements at once for a real government to be elected by the people.

A Congress of five hundred members, elected by the people and called by the regents, met on March 12th 1841 and upon the motion of Carlos A. Lopez, appointed two consuls entrusted with the administration, for a term of three years. Before entering upon the duties of their office, they were required to swear: To maintain the independence of the republic under all conditions.

The two consuls elected were Mariano Roque Alonso and Carlos Antonio Lopez.

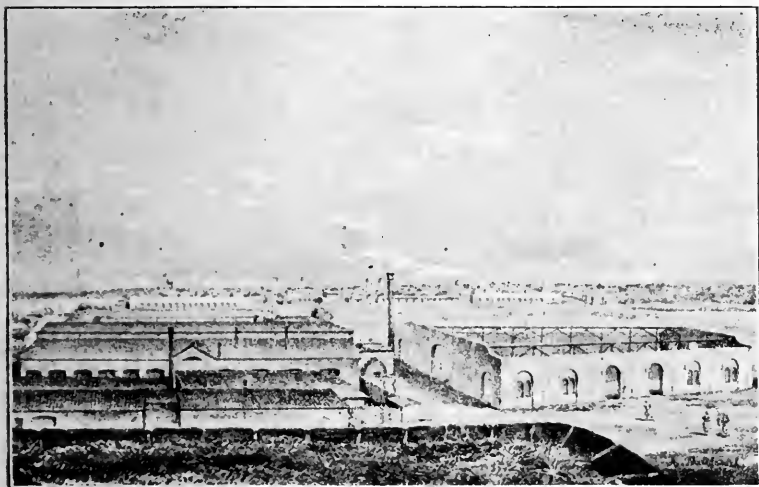
It is enigmatical that a nation, which for twenty-six years had endured the heavy pressure of a despot's iron hand, should voluntarily and trustfully submit to a new dictatorship, at a moment, when they had the opportunity to create for themselves, without war or bloodshed, another form of government. The only explanation to be found is that, the reign of Francia upon the whole, had been beneficial to the people. Certainly, peace and order prevailed everywhere, property and person were secure, agriculture and stock raising made progress, industry and the trades advanced and the boundaries were well protected from raids of hostile Indians.

The people simply confided in the honor of the newly elected consuls and this confidence was not misplaced.

The consuls had a severe task before them. They had to create anew and organize all the branches of the administration.

Not one citizen of Paraguay had any practice or experience in affairs of state. The new government, notwithstanding, moved by noble purposes, went into operation energetically.

Colonel Alonso was a good soldier, very honorable and endowed with strong common sense, but he totally lacked experience and skill in the administration of public affairs and uniformly submitted to the acknowledged superior experience and talent of his colleague although both were equals in power and authority.



Asuncion.

Carlos Antonio Lopez, a wealthy estanciero, had studied law and, for a short time, had devoted himself to the practice of his new profession in the city of Asuncion. He relinquished his legal practice when it became dangerous during the dictatorship of Francia and retired to his estate in the country; where he remained until the death of Francia, without taking any part in political affairs.

The two consuls apparently pursuing the course pointed out by the reign of Francia, nevertheless, soon began to inaugurate some reforms and to establish the necessary institutions of the government.

An act of general amnesty for political offences opened the new administration.

Six hundred persons, incarcerated by the former dictator for political crimes were liberated.

Those families, whom the Supremo had ruined by the confiscation of their estates, had the same restored to them, but the new government would not permit even the slightest abuse of the memory of the deceased dictator.

One of the most important acts of the consuls and the most prominent of the reforms instituted by them was the re-opening of several Paraguayan ports to foreign commerce. The nation, with this act abandoned the old policy of isolation, maintained for thirty years and again entered into intercourse with the outside world. The advantages, due to this change, were soon manifest notwithstanding the high duties still levied upon exports and imports.

When the Congress again assembled in 1844 at the expiration of the first term of the consular government, Lopez sent a message recommending the passage of a law by which the executive power should be lodged in the hands of a President. Such a law was adopted and the consul Carlos Antonio Lopez was elected President for the term of ten years.

The new President commenced to reorganize and restore the disrupted and decayed institutions of the church and to this end put himself in communication with Rome. The country by the aid of the Holy See, received an able Bishop who, immediately, proceeded to have a number of young, intelligent Paraguayans educated for the priesthood and ordained as pastors. Churches were rebuilt and adorned, and among these the ruined Cathedral of Asuncion.

These measures intensely pleased the Paraguayans, who, since the time of the Jesuits, were imbued with fervent religious sentiments.

An academy, under the name of «Academia literaria» in which were taught latin, philosophy, mathematics, law and theology, was also founded in the capital.

The President also devoted much of his time and attention to the promotion of elementary education.

Lopez, as zealously as Francia, looked after the defence of the country. He made military duty general, increased the army, purchased extensive stores of material of war from foreign countries, especially from England and them stored in de-

pots. He had truced the fortress Humaitá on the lower Paraguay by Brazilian engineers,—the same fortress which subsequently was constructed with but slight modifications of the original plans, which was armed with about four hundred cannons of heavy calibre and which for decades was dreaded by all South American states as the invincible bulwark of the country.

In 1854, at the expiration of his first term of office, Lopez, amid universal enthusiasm, was reelected President for another term of ten years. A deputy even offered a resolution to «proclaim Carlos Antonio Lopez emperor and to make the crown hereditary in his family.

The President not only opposed the resolution strenuously but he also accepted the presidency for a term of three years only.

A measure which was carried out by the President at this time was, in many respects, the actual cause of the many misfortunes which were to inflict themselves upon the country subsequently. It was the revocation of that article of the constitution which said : «no military persons whatever and no civil person below the age of forty-five years shall be eligible for the office of President.

An extraordinary Congress, elected in 1857 for the special purpose of choosing a new President, elected the oldest son of Lopez who, up to that time, had been a general of the army and filled the position of secretary of war. Francisco Solano Lopez, as he was called, declined the honor under the pretext of total lack of experience in affairs of state, and his father, upon the urgent request of the deputies, once more accepted the trying post of President of the Republic, this time for the term of seven years and upon the explicit condition that he should have the exclusive right to nominate and appoint his successor in office.

This condition was conceded to the tried ruler.

It seems self evident, that the refusal by the son and, after urgent and repeated requests from deputies, the acceptance of the presidency by the father, was nothing more nor less than a well concerted scheme of the two. Such, at least, is the firm conviction of the author, after an extensive and careful investigation of the matter, made during a sojourn of three

years in Paragnay. The consideration of the fact that Carlos Antonio Lopez was a thorough going autocrat, although he himself have selected the title of President that the deputies or members of Congress, being elected through his influence, were merely his tools and that any opposition was yet followed by loss of life and liberty, removes every doubt as to the complete understanding between father and son in their little play before the assembly.

The *Supremo Gobierno*, as in the time of Francia's dictatorship, enjoyed in the public eye that mysterious, inaccessible «majesty that doth hedge a king.»

The physical vigor of the President began to ebb away rapidly and, conscious of approaching death, he made his last will and testament on the 15th day of August 1862. By it and in accordance with the right granted him by a resolution of Congress in 1857, he appointed his oldest son General Francisco Solano Lopez, born July 24th 1827, as his successor in office.

Four weeks later, on September 10th 1862, and mourned by all, expired Carlos Antonio Lopez at the age of sixty-five.

His son Francisco Solano Lopez, thirty-five years of age stepped into the heritage left him.



The Marshal-President

One of the last evenings of the month of October A.D. 1865 was dark and rainy. Not a star was visible. A warm rain had, for two hours, been pouring down on the Fortress Humaità and its environs and had begun to cool the sultry almost insupportable heated atmosphere.

The batteries, constructed of solid masonry on the high-river bank or barranca could scarcely be distinguished through the pitchy darkness at a distance of twenty-five paces. The

guns of heavy calibre, mounted *en barbette* and cast some 50 years before, did not betray their presence by any perceptible gleam.

An exception to this was the most northerly located battery. It was called the *bateria de los carbones* (charcoal battery) on account of the depot of charcoal in its vicinity. Pit coal, for heating purpose, was unknown in Paraguay at that time. The brightly burnished eight bronze cannons, mostly 68-pounders and cast at the arsenal at Asuncion, sent a faint gleam through the mist, rain and darkness.



The Battery "Londres" of the Fortress Humayta

To the left of this was located the battery called *bateria de las cadenas* (chain battery) equipped with eighteen heavy British naval guns, which, in connection with the casemated battery *Londres* of sixteen cannons of heavy calibre, were designed to prevent the passage up-stream of the hostile fleet through the narrows, which here are only six hundred paces in width.

To facilitate this object, three heavy, strong chains, resting on canoes, were stretched across the river. These chains could be lowered from the eastern bank so as to permit the passage of the Paraguayan vessels.

The other shore-batteries *numero ocho*, *La Commandancia*, *Coimbra*, *Tacuari*, *Maestranza*, *Humaità*, and *Concha*, whose main object was to resist and prevent the approach of hostile vessels to the narrows, were placed within the circumvallation and along the river at the points strategically most commanding and important.

Ninety-three cannons of heavy calibre were mounted here to command the river.

About five hundred paces to the rear of the *bateria de las carbonas* loomed up the spacious but plain church with its heavy and clumsy doors. In close proximity thereto stood in a row four neat cottages with verandahs in front. The first to the right hand, was the headquarters of Francisco Solano Lopez, the Marshal-President, the next served as the headquarters of the general staff, the third was occupied by the Adjutanture and Auditor and the fourth was used as an office by the intendature. These cottages, the residence of the commander of the fortress, the parsonage, divers hospitals, the prison, ten small barracks for artillery and the large barrack for infantry, located to the north of the church, constituted nearly all the buildings within the fortress, whose walls, bristling with cannons and honeycombed with bomb-proof powder magazines, enclosed an area four thousand paces long, from north to south, by two thousand paces in width.

Almost the only houses within this wide space.—But no!

In the centre of Humaità, equidistant from the church and the cemetery, were erected four smaller cottages which served as the temporary homes of the ladies of the higher officers. The social etiquette of the upper and distinguished Paraguayan circles demanded that husband and wife, or rather man and woman, should not live under the same roof. This may seem strange. But if it be considered that real marriages were extremely rare in that country than this peculiar kind of marital relation will seem, to some extent at least justifiable. It must not be supposed, however, that this led to moral turpitude. On the contrary, nowhere, in all South America could be found such a hearty, happy domestic life as in Paraguay. Children conducted themselves with the greatest respect towards their parents, and the young ladies, although devoid of higher education, displayed an innate charm, and a grace and propriety of behavior truly remarkable.

At a distance of two hundred paces from the last mentioned house and distinguished by its greater elegance stood the cottage occupied by the haughty Madame Elisa Lynch.

The troops within the fortress, about five thousand at that time, were quartered in sheds built of wood, reed and rushes, where they made life as comfortable as they could.

A bright ray of light, issuing from the open door of the Marshal-President's residence fell upon the baldosas-covered floor of the portico in front, where a rather corpulent man, of medium size and with a thick neck supporting a round head covered with thick, black hair, walked rapidly up and down the colonnade.

The pale face, framed by closely clipped, dark whiskers showed signs of a high intelligence. The black eyes, half veiled by the lowered lids, were rivetted to the ground.

The movement of the person indicated an intense, feverish excited state of his feelings.

The six sentinels of the battalion of rifle-guards, placed at a short distance from the portico, could readily observe the action of this individual, how he spasmodically jerked down the gold-laced collar of his scarlet uniform with both hands, as though trying to remove something disagreeable which was choking him.

He had received very unpleasant news from the theatre of war and this had momentarily deprived him of his composure.

Were his proud and ambitious schemes to explode and vanish like soap-bubbles.

Never !

Independencia ó muerte ! (Independence or Death.) This motto of the republic, which had guided the administrations of Francia and Carlos Antonio Lopez, must be the only compass of his course in the coming battles with the *macacos* (wood-apes, derisive term used for the Brazilians) for the independence of the country which had been bequeathed to him as trust and a heritage.

Independencia ó muerte !—Perish who may ! Everything for the independence of Paraguay. I will not disgrace the confidence which my father reposed in me. Paraguay must re-

main independent or perish, but this only after the last male inhabitant has been sacrificed.

Thus murmuring to himself this person strode rapidly up and down the illuminated colonnade.

They were disagreeable reports, indeed, which so excited the Supremo, as his faithful Paraguayans were wont to call him.

Two weeks ago he had received the information from Itapúa of the surrender at the little town of Uruguayana in the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul of a Paraguayan army of 12,000 soldiers under the command of Estegarríbia. To-day a telegram from Itapirí brought the news of the advance of the allied army from the city of Corrientes to the Laguna Brava and to the north bank of the Rio Paraná.—Certainly, reasons enough to disquiet him, who only two weeks ago, had revelled in the dream of conquest in South America *a la* Napoleon I in Europe.

These dreams, so suspiciously begun, were interrupted so suddenly and unexpectedly, that the Supremo, then only thirty-eight years of age, found it difficult to adapt himself to the new and changed order of things.

«I have to inform Your Excellency that General Resquin reports that with only 25,000 soldiers under his orders he cannot check the advance of the hostile army of 60,000 men furnished with abundant artillery and, therefore, asks Your Excellency's permission to retreat to the right bank of the Rio Parana at Itapirí»

The officers, who had just entered the verandah and made the report, wore the uniform of a general, a rare distinction, for in the whole Paraguayan army, at that time 50,000 strong, there were, besides the Marshal-President, only three generals and these of the rank of major-generals.

A short pause ensued, interrupted of a sudden by an angry vicious «Car . . . ! » ejected from the profoundest depth of his breast.

«General Robles, the former commander of Corrientes, with his two adjutants, will be shot at seven o'clock to-morrow morning !—understood ?» added the Marshal-President in a threatening voice and turning with piercing eye to the general who stood before him in military fashion.

This officer, General Barrios, a brother-in-law of the Supremo, acting chief of the staff or rather quartermaster-general, in the place of General Resquin, (Lopez conducting everything personal, had no general staff) entered a brief note in his memorandum book, and bowed with military brevity.

It was the death warrant of the three officers pointed out by Lopez and in accordance with it they were shot at the appointed time in the fatal square.

«Send word to General Resquin to retreat across the river at once and to take up his position at the Paso de la Patria! I shall go there myself and assume the supreme command in person. It becomes our duty to defend the country to the last drop of blood and I expect that every Paraguayan is ready to make the sacrifice !—See to it that my orders are executed.»

A gesture with the hand from the Supremo and General Barrios, after a short salute, departed with a quick military step.

An elegant carriage stopped before the verandah a few minutes later. A servant, clad in red livery, sprang to the ground and opened the door. A lady, lithe and slender, and attired in rustling silk descended from the conveyance, entered the portico with a springy, elastic step flung her arms tenderly around the neck of the pale man and whispered a few soft fond words into his ear.

The effect was marvellous.

The feverish excitement of the Marshal-President vanished instantly and gave way to a quiet cheerfulness.

The bright light from the lamp in the room fell full upon the woman, who, through her sudden appearance had wrought such a remarkable change.

She was about twenty-eight years of age. The dark-blue silken robe closely clinging to the voluptuous forms, brought out the proud, flexible figure in strong relief, A cape of red silk, trimmed with snow-white swansdown and covered with golden studs and black cords and held by a heavy cord of gold hung gracefully from her uncovered shoulders. The luxuriant gold-blond hair was arranged « a la page » and held in a black silk net. A Hungarian baret, adorned with heron plumes fastened by a golden clasp, audaciously crowned her head. Out of the delicate, white countenance, a pair of dark-blue eyes, shad-

ed by heavy lashes, looked tenderly up to the Supremo. These eyes were conscious of their power.

The woman was beautiful, seductively beautiful like the serpent of paradise.

Who was the woman ?

The Paraguayans, generally knew her as «Madama Doña Elisa Lynch», the soldiers called her simply «Madame» for she had contrived to make herself very popular with the army.

Madame had been for ten years the companion, the partner, but not the legal wife of the Marshal-President and was the mother of his children. But it was not this alone by which this woman with such a keen intellect, was enabled to exert such an extraordinary influence ; it was principally her superior education and knowledge joined with great courage and defiance of death, which she had shown repeatedly,—these were the indissoluble ties by which she bound the Supremo to herself.

The last mentioned qualities, especially, were those which excited the admiration of the Marshal-President, who, although energetic and circumspect, was totally wanting in personal courage.

Francisco Solano Lopez, then secretary of war, accompanied by a number of young intelligent Paraguayans, who acted as adjutants and attachés, was, in 1853, sent on an extraordinary mission to Paris by his father Carlos Antonio Lopez, the President of the republic. The elegant, gay and frivolous life in the salons, the theatres, the ball rooms and at the imperial court, did not fail to make a deep impression on the young ambassador.

He threw himself with reckless zest into the whirling vortex of pleasure and dissipation which the gay capital of France merrily presents to the visitor.

The balls of the grand opera and the fascinating nights of the Jardin Mabille could narrate many piquant tales of the young Paraguayan who was one of the most constant, zealous and wanton visitors.

Lorettes and cocottes grew enthusiastic over this son of the American wilderness. They petted and lionized him on account of his well-filled, always openpurse.

The future ruler of Paraguay met Elisa Lynch at one of the balls of the grand opera and instantly became enamoured of her with all the vehemence of his ardent soul.

He became a frequent visitor at the residence of the young woman which she shared with her mother and a sister. His proposals were accepted by Madame and she unhesitatingly agreed to accompany him to Paraguay.

Elisa Lynch, a native of England, at the age of sixteen married a well-to-do countryman of hers and became a widow a few months after her marriage.

The charming young widow, accompanied by her mother, went to France, and there, two years subsequently, married a French physician, who, a man of high reputation and enjoying general esteem, to-day fills the position of a director of one of the leading botanical gardens of France. It proved to be a very unhappy union and husband and wife soon concluded to separate. The young wife resumed her maiden name and urged by an unconquerable desire for frivolous adventures speedily became a noted dashing danseuse of the public balls. At one of these Lopez formed her acquaintance—an acquaintance, which was to be so fatal to themselves and to the whole people of Paraguay.

Eliza Lynch accompanied her new lover to South America, and until his death, which occurred on March 1st 1870 remained faithfully at his side.

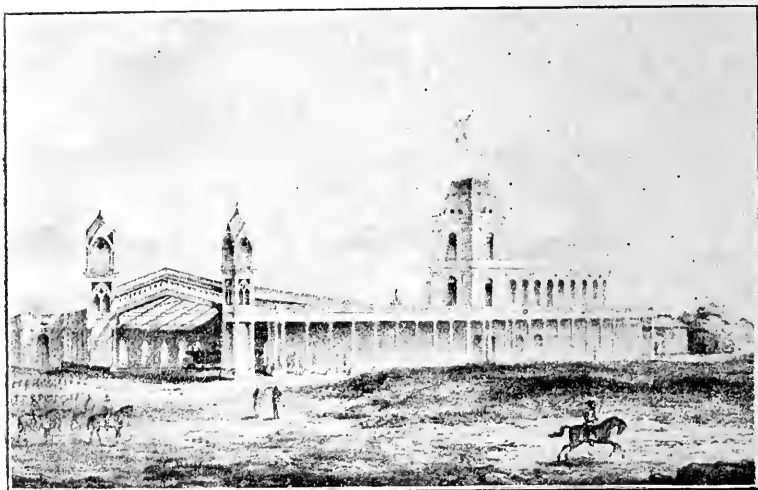
Shortly before his departure from Paris, young Lopez was a spectator of events and scenes which made an enduring impression on his mind and which influenced him later to recklessly provoke a war which was to almost exterminate his people.

This event was the triumphant entry into Paris in the year 1856 of the victorious French army, returning from the battlefields of the Crimea. The imposing, military pomp unfolded, impressed the young Paraguayan general deeply and the incessant, enthusiastic rejoicing of the army and the nation which greeted the emperor, filled him with envy and engendered a strong desire within his heart to play the same part in South America which Napoleon was acting in Europe at that time.

When Francisco Solano Lopez, upon the death of his father on the 10th of September 1862, grasped the reins of government he at once completed the erection of the arsenal at Asuncion where small arms were manufactured, cannons cast and the heavy machinery for steam vessels was constructed.

Besides a navy yard and two powder-mills he built an iron foundry at the little town of Ibiçuy, to utilize the rich and extensive iron mines near that place.

He also began the construction of a railway to connect Asuncion with Villa Rica, of which, at the commencement of the war, there were completed and in operation fourteen leagues to the town of Paraguary.



Railway Station at Asuncion

The boundaries of the country were, furthermore, connected with the capital by lines of telegraph constructed by a German, Fischer von Trenenfeld.

But neither the erection of these works, which seemed to absorb his whole attention, nor the brilliant entertainments and courtly splendour, with which he and Madame Lynch, his honored and recognized consort, surrounded themselves after the manner of European potentates, could quench his inordinate ambitious desire to become a South American Caesar.

This purpose, growing into a fixed idea, gave him no peace by day and night and he became firmly resolved to improve the first opportunity presented, to declare war against the neighboring states.

That opportunity was soon to come.

In the Republic Banda Oriental del Uruguay, then as now, two parties, the colorados and the blancos, struggled for supremacy.

The blancos then were in possession of the government, but General Flores, the chief of the colorados, with the secret support of the Argentine Republic, stirred up an insurrection in the interior and was successful in a series of engagements.

The blancos had committed the blunder to take away cattle, from and to inflict serious damage upon the estancieros of the northern districts of the republic who were generally citizens of the Brazilian province of Rio Grande de Sul.

Brazil, upon complaint being made, sent an ultimatum to Uruguay, peremptorily requesting the cessation of such conduct and demanding payment for the damages sustained by her citizens.

President Aguirre, on the 9th day of August 1864 returned the ultimatum with the observation: «A reply to the ultimatum is beneath the dignity of the republic.»

He turned at once to the Marshal-President of Paraguay with a request of assistance.

The latter sent a note to the Cabinet at Rio de Janeiro stating: «that he should not view with indifference the invasion of Uruguay by Brazilian forces.»

Another note, addressed to President Mitre at Buenos Aires contained the menace that a further and continued support of the rebellion in the Banda Oriental by the Argentine Republic in supplying the insurgents with money, arms, ammunition, uniforms etc. would be considered by him as sufficient reason for an armed intervention.

Brazil ignored the threat and Brazilian troops crossed the border of Uruguay.

The Argentine Government, on the contrary, recognizing the impropriety of its former conduct, ceased to render further support to the rebellion in a friendly and neighboring state.

The insurgent colorados, with the aid of Brazil, were finally victorious.

Montevideo surrendered on the 22nd of February 1865 and General Flores was proclaimed Dictator of the Banda Oriental.

On November 10th 1864 Lopez ordered the seizure of the Brazilian steamer «Marquez de Olinda» which, with the recently

appointed governor of the province of Matto Grosso on board, was ascending the Rio Paragnay. The crew and the passengers were thrown into prison.

The declaration of war by Paraguay against Brazil followed on the 13th day of December 1864 and Paraguayan troops simultaneously invaded the Brazilian province Matto Grosso, plundering and devastating the land in a barbarous manner.

The Brazilian naval squadron, anchored at Montevideo pursuant to orders from Rio de Janeiro, made preparations to ascend the river and to retaliate upon the riparian towns of Paraguay. Lopez, to counteract this naval manoeuvre by an attack on land, requested the permission of Bartolomé Mitre, President of the Argentine Republic, to march his army through the Misiones Occidentales into Brazil.

Mitre declined to grant the request, adding, that such a permission given by a neutral state to one of the belligerents would be a violation of the laws of nations.

Upon receipt of this answer, on the 13th day of April, Lopez had two Argentine passenger steamers seized in the port of Corrientes and their crews cut down by two of his armed ships.

The next day he ordered 40,000 soldiers under the command of General Robles to invade the Argentine province of Corrientes and to occupy the city of the same name.

The Argentine Republic, Brazil and Banda Oriental, in consequence of this rude and brutal conduct, entered into an alliance for the purpose of joining their forces in a war against Paraguay and one of the main stipulations of the treaty consisted of the mutual agreement not to lay down their arms until the government of Lopez was destroyed for ever.

General Mitre, President of the Argentine Republic, was entrusted with the chief command of the allied army and the navy was placed under the separate and independent command of the Brazilian Admiral Jamandaré.

The war, which was to last five years, had begun.

A Paraguayan army corps of 8,000 men, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Estegarribia, surrendered on the 18th of September 1865 in the Brazilian town of Uruguayana. This division originally consisted of 16,000 men, but a brigade of 4,000 soldiers under Major Duarte had four weeks previous-

ly been annihilated by General Flores on the banks of the Corrientian river Yataí.

General Robles, the commander of the troops at Corrientes, and his two adjutants were arrested on the 23rd of July by the order of Lopez and taken to the Fortress Humaitá.

General Resquin superseded him. He advanced as far as Bella Vista but retreated to the north upon the approach of Mitre with an army of 60,000 men, which moved from Concordia toward Bella Vista. The allied armies followed General Resquin and camped on the banks of the Laguna Brava between the city of Corrientes and the Rio Parana.

General Resquin, rightly considering his position on the left bank of the river untenable requested permission of Lopez to retreat to the right bank.

This news it was which put the Marshal-President in such a furious rage and which resulted in the order for the execution of General Robles and his adjutants.

Only the caresses of the woman, who, until his death, exerted such a disastrous and demoniacal influence upon him, were able to calm his rage.

The bright lights, radiating from the apartment of the headquarters, were extinguished.

Dense darkness enveloped the building.

T u y u t y .

Thirty-thousand Paraguayans, ready to fight and to die, stood assembled behind the intrenchments, two hours before sunrise on May 23rd 1866. They were awaiting an attack from the allied armies across a narrow, crescent-shaped isthmus between extensive swamps and boggy water courses.

The Estero Rojas (a swamp covered with reeds and rushes) upon whose northern borders the intrenchments were erected, is situated about three leagues south of Humaitá and about the same distance from the north bank of the Río Paraná.

The allied army crossed the Paraná on the 16th of April, and on the 18th a Paraguayan division was defeated between Itapirú and the Paso de la Patria by the Brazilian General Osorio. Lopez, therefore, four days later, evacuated the strong position at Paso de la Patria on account of the heavy bombardment by the Brazilian fleet, crossed the Esteros Bellaco and Rojas and took up his position on the northern edge of the Estero Rojas. Here, in a swampy region, called Tuyuty, admirably adapted for a stubborn defence, he erected detached intrenchments and connected breastworks with a rapidity which contrasted strikingly with the slow, heavy movements of the allies.

Lopez, on the 2nd day of May, sent Lieutenant-Colonel Diaz with only 6,000 men to surprise the allied army which camped between the Paso de la Patria and the Estero Bellaco. It was a grand success, and if, instead of 6,000, the Marshal-President had ordered 20,000 soldiers to strike the blow, the invading army would have been annihilated. The odds were too great in favor of the allies although the advance guard commanded by General Flores was wiped out of existence. Each side suffered a loss of about 2,000 dead and wounded. The Paraguayans also captured four cannons with ammunition wagons belonging to them and three flags which were at once taken to the headquarters of Lopez at Paso* Poquí one league to the north of the Estero Rojas.

Lopez had chosen Paso Poquí for his headquarters because it was so far in the rear of the intrenchments that it was beyond the reach of hostile bullets. When, on the 18th of April previous, he was in close proximity of a real battle and heard the ominous whistling of bullets and the shriek of shells he became as nervous and violently agitated that he turned over the command of the army to General Resquin so that he could retreat to a place of greater safety.

*) A Pass. The Pasos mentioned frequently are no mountain passes but fords through swamps and lagunas.

Although the commander-in-chief of the Paraguayan army lost every spark of courage the moment he heard the dreaded noise of flying shells and balls, he was, notwithstanding, a man, endowed, in an extraordinary manner, with energy, circumspection and tenacity of purpose.

Within the four preceeding weeks he constructed the necessary fortifications to protect the position of his army, mounted the intrenchments with guns of heavy calibre brought from Fortress Humaitá and connected the different and detached works by telegraph with his headquarters. The most insignificant events and details of everything happening in the front had to be reported to him and from his desk, and without leaving headquarters, he could direct the movements of the whole army.

The sun advanced toward the zenith and by ten o'clock the morning fogs were dispersed and a clear view could be obtained of the ground in front and of the wide-spreading encampment of the enemies. No indications of preparations for an attack could be observed and yet, spies had reported to Lopez that the allies intended to make an assault on that day.

The hostile camp appeared absolutely harmless. Nothing transpired but the ordinary incidents of every-day camp life. Some soldiers were engaged in slaughtering cattle, others were sent to the forest for fuel and still others occupied themselves in procuring the necessary supply of water.

It was impossible to imagine that these troops contemplated a surprise. The Marshal-President must have been deceived or the reports must have been unintentionally false.

A signal was given, the batallion disbanded and the Paraguayan soldiers behind the intrenchments began the same daily routine of camp life which had been observed with the enemy in front.

It was about one o'clock in the afternoon when a negro with his hands tied behind, was brought to headquarters by the guard.

The answers of the man to the interrogatories propounded by General Resquin were unsatisfactory and as the negro became tangled up in his own contradictions he was tied hand and foot, thrown on the ground and his bare back belabored with a

lasso, made of leather thongs, until it was a mass of raw quivering flesh.

The procedure was effective. The negro, when he saw the peril of his situation, was ready to make clear and truthful statements.

He declared that he had been a trumpeter with a Brazilian batallion of infantry, but that on account of bad treatment by his superior officers he had deserted to the Paragnayans. In regard to the surprise he only knew that General Mitre had postponed the same for two days to the 25th of May, the natal day of the Argentine Republic, but that it would occur on that day without doubt.

When this was reported to the Marshal-President he resolved to anticipate the allies and to give them the very surprise which they intended for him.

That afternoon he made a tour of inspection throughout the whole camp and fortifications, visiting every division of his troops.

He was greeted with enthusiastic cheers wherever he appeared. His glowing words inflamed their souls to a degree that they were willing to die for him.

He pointed out to them how the macacos (Brazilians) had invaded the land for the purpose of enslaving the Paraguayans; that they would sell them in the public slavemarkets of Rio de Janeiro, that their wives and daughters, after being outraged by these disgusting monkeys would suffer the same fate, and that the whole land and the property of his brave soldiers would be divided as booty between them.—«But I know» he continued, «that my brave and dear Paraguayans will suffer a thousand deaths before they will endure such infamy at the hands of these brutes, which are even beneath the swine. I swear to you, and you are witnesses of my oath, that, as long as I shall live, these beasts shall never accomplish their brutal purposes. The sacred soil of our country has for the last six weeks, been polluted by the feet of these negroes, but we will wash out this disgrace with their own blood. To-morrow, at one and the same moment, this whole army will throw itself from all sides on these cowardly scoundrels, resting in fancied security, and will exterminate them! No mercy, no pity on them! I have enticed these filthy robbers to this place so that

not one of them shall escape your avenging sword! Here, in these swamps shall their bodies decay and their bones bleach in the sun! I have selected the swamps of Tuyuty as the place where you will execute a terrible judgment on those who have insulted the honor of our country! Tuyuty shall be called the «carrión ground» in the future? Soldiers! Depend on your own strength and the justice of our cause! Victory is yours! Only 6,000 Paraguayans defeated the whole army of the enemy on the 2nd of May and captured four cannons, four ammunition wagons and three flags! To-morrow the whole army will strike a heavy blow. You will win a signal and brilliant victory and will annihilate the enemy! I know everyone of you will do his duty! Let us defeat them to-morrow and, if it must be, let us die, shouting: «*Viva la Republica del Paraguay!*» *Independencia ó muerte!*»

The speech was powerful and grand in its effect. The enthusiastic shouts from thousands of throats filled the air. The Paraguayans threw themselves on the ground, tore their hair and acted like veritable lunatics.

Lopez was a skilful orator. He knew how to manage the Guaranis. He knew how to stir up their passions and to inflame them to madness: and a moment after, if he deemed it best, to subject them to the yoke of an iron discipline so that they dared not to move a muscle.

General Barrios was called to Lopez an hour before midnight to receive the following instructions:

Barrios with 8,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry and 10 guns will start an hour before sunrise and march through the swampy, timbered Potrero Piris to the Estero Bellaco. Arrived there, and having ranged his troops for the assault under the cover of the woods, he will discharge a gun which will be the signal for the general attack. This was for the reason that the route assigned to his division was more difficult and circuitous than those of the others.

The general bowed and silently departed from the room.

Colonel Diaz, a superb officer, whose dark eyes, notwithstanding the energetic, severe and even threatening expression of the countenance, reflected admiration and devotion for the Supremo, entered the room as soon as General Barrios had left. Lopez understood this officer thoroughly and knew how

to appreciate his good qualities which consisted in reckless impetuosity and in grim, undying hatred of the enemies of his country.

The colonel was selected to lead the centre. He was to take 6,000 infantry and four Howitzers and at sunrise to march through the Paso Gomez, then to take up his position under cover of the woods and upon hearing the signal gun of General Barrios to charge with his men through the *bañado* in front into the camp of the enemy and to cut down everything before him.

General Resquin immediately followed Colonel Diaz.

He was ordered to take 7,000 cavalry, 3,000 infantry and 10 cannons through the Paso Yataiti-Corá, attack in full force and energetically the Argentinians on the enemy's right flank and to send his cavalry around to us to meet that of General Barrios sweeping around the enemy's left wing, to unite these and charge the allies in the rear, putting them between two fires and destroying them.

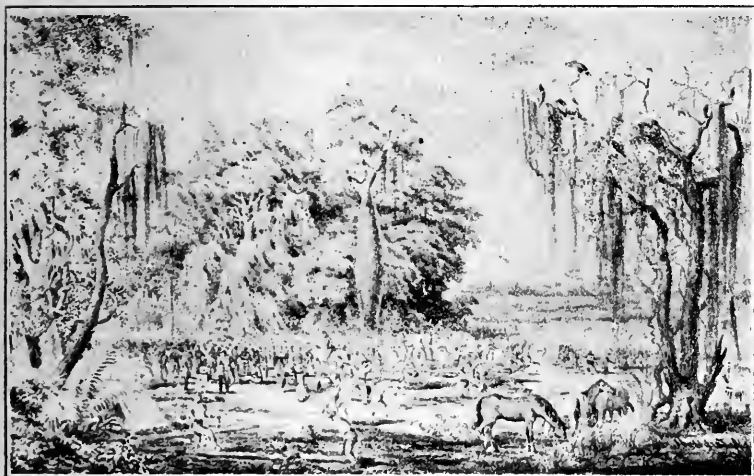
Such were the dispositions made.

It is surprising that Lopez gave to each general his particular instructions and orders. It was a principle with him to communicate to each chief only that which particularly concerned him, so that none of them should presume to be able to take the chief command himself. It is also a matter of astonishment that he sent only 24 field-pieces with an army of 21,000 soldiers which was designed to make the attack, although he had at hand an abundance of field artillery. The swampy, miry ground, covered with thickets and timber which impeded the movements and evolutions of artillery, may explain the fact. A number of rocket batteries, as a substitute for the heavier cannons, were ordered forward during the battle and gave evidence of their destructive force.

General Barrios, with his troops, put himself in motion shortly before four o'clock in the morning. The line of march was extremely difficult and toilsome. The infantry, frequently, could only advance in single file, the cavalry had to dismount and lead the horses by the bridle and the guns could only be brought forward by the supreme efforts of the cannoneers who had to draw them. The soft, swampy, wooded Potrero Piris, well enough adapted for the movements of small detachments,

presented almost insurmountable obstacles to the manoeuvres and advance of a large army.

It was 11 o'clock when the column finally reached the northern edge of the Laguna Piris and the eastern border of the potrero of the same name. The troops were arranged in order of battle behind a narrow strip of timber which the allies had neglected to occupy. The cavalry, with the right leaning on the Estero Bellaco, formed the right wing. The infantry formed the centre and the left, and the artillery, composed of cannons and rocket batteries, was placed in the gaps between the batallions.



On the March.

Diaz and Resquin had reached their appointed places hours ago and impatiently awaited the signal for the attack.

The allied camp, situated on a horseshoe-shaped elevation, some four or five kilometers in length and surrounded by swamps presented, at this time, the ordinary, customary, careless life of the soldier.

The Argentines, under the command of General Pamero occupied the right flank. Orientals, Argentines and Brazilians, commanded by General Flores, formed the centre and the Brazilians, under the command of General Osorio, were placed on

the left wing. One hundred and fifty field-pieces, more than half of them rifled muzzle-loaders, were placed along the whole extensive front.

The allied armies remained under arms until nine o'clock. The fog disappeared and the ground in front could be clearly seen. Nothing of a suspicious nature could be observed. The guards were relieved, the batallions separated and the usual daily occupations began. Some butchered cattle, some chopped wood, some carried water and some were commanded to draw rations at the proveduria. Scarcely one third of the allied army, then estimated at 48,000 men, remained in camp, engaged in cooking or loafing about.

It was now half past eleven o'clock. The detailed detachments had not yet returned and many empty stomachs longed for the advent of fresh meat from the slaughter pens.

Then, the boom of a cannon from the woods in front of the Laguna Piris suddenly startled the soldiers who had remained in camp. A second discharge followed immediately and then the roar of cannons, the rattle and clatter of musketry and the hailstorm of missiles sweeping into the camp.

The bañados (a small laguna) were instantly alive with men and 25,000 Paragnayan warriors, shouting vociferously «*Viva la Republica del Paraguay!*» *Independencia ó muerte!* dashed through the swamps in front of the allied camp.

The attacking forces were intoxicated with enthusiasm.

Intoxicated and ready to die, not only with the innate and fostered love of their country, but also from the inspiring harangue of the Supremo, in whose person they recognized the embodiment of their fatherland.

«Let us die for Paragnay!»—Let us perish for our families!—Death to the macacos!—No Pardon!»

The Paragnayans, like 25,000 incarnate demons scared their enemies out of the *dolce far niente* they were enjoying.

The awakening was terrible.

The shrill blare of trumpets called the few remaining, half dressed soldiers to their colors.

Scarcely fifteen or twenty men could be collected to form a company here and there. Each gun had only two or three men ready for service.

Independencia ó muerte! Mueran los salvajes macacos! (Death to these savage monkeys.)

The wild battle-yell of the fanatic Paraguayans rang in the ears of the terrified hostile soldiers.

Every man of the allied army felt that to-day he had to vanquish or perish.

Terrific and unexpected as was the onslaught which exterminated the first Brazilian and Argentine battalions before they could grasp their guns, the allied officers, with heroic efforts, succeeded in restoring some order, especially when the detailed detachments hurriedly returned. The battle then became regular and general along the whole line and the Paraguayans gradually lost the advantage which they had gained at first by the surprise.

General Osorio with his Brazilian troops on the left wing was thrice forced back to the edge of the Estero Bellaco and thrice, at the point of the bayonet, he drove the Paraguayans under General Barrios back to the sheltering woods. The latter, recognizing the futility of struggling further against an enemy well supplied with artillery, broke off the fight towards four o'clock in the afternoon.

The contest in the centre, of Colonel Diaz against General Flores, was the severest along the line. The front of the allies was here protected by a broad and deep *bañado* which could be swept in all directions by their 34 field guns placed upon the rim of the swamp.

The advance of the Paraguayans, when, upon the given signal, with enthusiastic cheers they plunged into the morass, was extremely slow and laborious. The murderous fire of canister from the enemy's guns mowed them down in rows, stopped the advance and forced them to retreat to the woods under the greatest difficulties. It was a bare chance that of the 6,000 warriors any escaped with their lives. The ammunition chests of the allies were filled with cartouches and shells but contained only two charges of grape-shot for each gun, so that after these had been fired only shells remained. If there had been a sufficient supply of grape-shot, the column of Colonel Diaz would have been totally exterminated.

The 25th battalion of Paraguayans halted in the swamp when it could proceed no further. General Flores demanded

its surrender. The men simply replied that they had no order to surrender.

The brave batallion was shot down to the last man.

The bañado was so covered with corpses in the evening that, by stepping from one to another, a person could walk dry shod from one side of the swamp to the other.

General Resquin was at first quite successful in his attack on the Argentines. He had crossed the Estero Rojas by the Paso Yataiti-Corá and deployed his troops, mostly cavalry, in a battle line behind a narrow palm grove.

When the signal gun was fired and the Paraguayans made a simultaneous assault on the allied lines, he too, dashed forward with his troopers, rode down two hostile brigades commanded by Generals Hornos and Caceres, flung himself on the 20 Argentine guns which were here stationed and cut down the men before they could fire a single shot. On the point of drawing off the guns by means of lassos, the Paraguayans were in return attacked by troops of the 1st Argentine batallion of the line, and of the *legion militar* (now batallion No. 8 of the line) quickly collected by the officers. They made a bayonet charge, retook the guns, drove off the Paraguayans and turned the guns upon them.

In vain were all the efforts of the Paraguayan infantry. General Paunero had his Argentine troops now in order and well in hand and every attack was beaten back.

General Resquin saw plainly that further struggling was useless and disastrous, but he had orders from Lopez to unite his cavalry with that of General Barrios in the rear of the enemy. Although his regiments had suffered terribly already he sent them around the right flank of the Argentines to execute the given command. Four batallions of the national guard of the division «Buenos Aires» wheeled around and with their steady, deadly volleys swept the daring squadrons off the field.

Of all the bold troopers only Major Alabarieta with about twenty men, all more or less severely wounded, succeeded in reaching General Barrios who was then in full retreat.

The roar of the battle ceased towards four o'clock in the afternoon. The allies could see, when the clouds of the powder smoke lifted, what damage they had inflicted on their enemy. Six thousand dead Paraguayans covered the battlefield

and 8,000 severely wounded groaned in the thickets or in the swamps or were carried off by their countrymen.

The losses on the side of the allies were also heavy. The total of dead and wounded amounted to about 5,000. The trophies captured by them on that day consisted in 5 flags, 4 cannons, 10 ammunition wagons, 5,000 muskets and large quantities of other arms, saddles and accoutrements of war. 350 severely wounded prisoners were taken.

If General Mitre, the commander in chief, had known how to follow up the advantage gained and had ordered a general advance at once, he would have taken the fortress Humaitá without serious loss and very probably ended the war. The 11,000 Paraguayans, who escaped the fearful slaughter, were so disorganized and demoralized that it took a full week before the scattered fragments could be reorganized and formed into new companies, batallions and regiments.

But Mitre, although urgently requested to do so by Generals Flores and Osorio, could not rouse himself to such energetic action.

On the contrary, caution being the mother of wisdom, it was held to be the best policy to be on guard against these Paraguayan pícaros (rogues) and to fortify the camp in all directions.

The woods were full of severely wounded Paraguayans, many of them dragging themselves into the camp at Paso Pocu for some two or three days after the battle.

Major Coronel, shot through the breast, lay four days in the woods. His brave servant did not leave him but remained faithfully at his side. When he gave up all hope of recovery, he requested his servant to kill him, which was refused. Then he handed his sword and cap* to the servant, charging him to take them to the Supremo, to convince him, that he, Major Coronel, had performed his duty to the last moment. The major was discovered by a Paraguayan patrol on the fourth day of his suffering and taken to Paso Pocu. He recovered but fell six weeks later in the battle of the 18th of July.

* The insignia of rank in the Paraguayan army were fastened to the cap.

While the brave Paraguayans fought the murderous battles of their Supremo with a fury and utter contempt of death, which forced the highest encomiums from their enemies, Lopez himself endeavored to observe the cause of the battle through a field glass from his residence at Paso Poquí, at the safe distance of seven kilometres from the scenes of danger and carnage. A nervous restlessness took possession of him, which finally became so unbearable when he could recognize nothing distinctly on account of the intervening trees and when he had no news of the fight, that he concluded to ride up to the trenches.

What a supreme struggle it must have been for him to pluck up sufficient courage for that resolution.

The Bishop Palacios and his adjutant Marcus were requested to accompany him.

They had scarcely proceeded two kilometers when Lopez was again attacked by cannon-fright, his former malady. He declared, that possibly, he might be recognized by the allies, wherefore he turned into a palm grove where he was unobserved from friend or foe and from whence he could see nothing of the raging battle except the clouds of smoke rising above the trees.

Receiving no report from the front and noticing an increasing appetite, the Marshal-President rode back a short distance, dismounted and stretched himself on the soft grass in the shade of wide-branching trees. The well-filled saddle bags of the orderlies were emptied of a goodly supply of bread, sardines, pickles, and cognac for the strengthening of the inner man.

This very important business concluded, Lopez again returned to the palmgrove to wait for news from the battle.

The first of the wounded returning, passed this place towards three o'clock. They were stopped to give information of the fight in front. These people knew nothing of the movements of the whole army. They could only speak of the fragments of the action in which they had participated and they were trained to report nothing to the Supremo but what highly glorified the Paraguayan army. Lopez personally interrogated the men and it can readily be surmised how highly colored the reports were.

After four o'clock, when the thunder of the battle had ceased, Lopez, with companions rode to Paso Gomez to the house of Colonel Bruguez, chief of the artillery. Here, for the first time, from the reports of General Barrios and Colonel Diaz, he learned the disastrous outcome of the contest.

He was utterly dejected at first. But at ten o'clock at night, when he returned to Paso Pocu and when he had become convinced that the allies were not going to follow up their advantage at once, his former self-confidence was completely restored. To-day he had fathomed the character of his enemies. They were absolutely devoid of energy for a daring advance.

The Marshal-President reached headquarters in a cheerful frame of mind. The military bands were ordered to furnish lively, patriotic music during the night and provisions and caña-liquor were freely distributed among the soldiers and the people. Those of the soldiers who could yet dance, danced as if possessed and the wounded shouted «Victoria.»

Five adjutants at headquarters wrote glowing reports of a glorious victory for the «Semanario» (Weekly) the only newspaper published in Paraguay. These reports were submitted to the Marshal-President for inspection, and after his approval were that same night transmitted by telegraph to Asuncion. .

Colonels Diaz and Bruguez were promoted the following day to the rank of generals.

Such was the aspect of things among the swamps of Tuyny on the 24. day of May.



C u r u z ú.



On a steep barranca, about thirty feet high, which forms the left bank of the Rio Paraguay some six leagues above the place where it empties into Rio Paraná, Lopez had erected defences, armed with cannons of heavy calibre. The object of

these fortifications was to protect the right flank of his position on the northern edge of the Estero Rojas and more especially to stop the approach of the hostile fleet to Humaitá, the base of operations of his army.

Twenty-two of these heavy guns were, for this purpose, mounted to command the river and three of them were placed so as to sweep the swampy ground in front and to the south.

These fortifications, which they named Curupaiti, were situated about one league on a straight line to the southwest of Humaitá. By the river, due to the numerous bends of the stream, the distance was increased to three leagues.

The Marschal-President soon became aware of the fact that Curupaiti was the weakest point in his position. If the enemy were to concentrate his whole force upon this spot and capture the intrenchments, then the Paraguayan position on the Estero Rojas would be taken in the flank and the army would be forced on a hasty retreat to Humaitá.

Lopez, to avoid such a calamity, erected a fort in the shape of a cross, on the low, woody river bank at the only place where a landing of troops was possible. This fort, called Curuzú, which was located about 3000 paces south of Curupaiti, received a garrison of 2,800 men and 18 cannons were mounted on its walls.

Colonel Diaz was placed in command of both forts and Major Sayas, subject to the orders of Diaz, commanded at Curuzú.

The sites of the two forts were so well selected that, if any ships, going up stream, should pass Curuzú, they would encounter a crossfire, north from the cannons of Curupaiti and south-east from the guns of Curuzú.

Several dozen contact-torpedoes had, furthermore, been anchored in this part of the river—a fact well known to the Brazilian naval officers.

A long island covered with palms and other trees, the «isla de las palmas» (island of palms) filled the middle of the stream opposite to Curuzú.

The territory surrounding Curuzú is very unfavorable for an assault. Swamps, dense woods and the thorny thickets, so characteristic in these latitudes of the southern hemisphere,

furnished natural barriers such as the skill of the best military engineers could not have improved upon.

Deep lagunes with miry bottoms alternated with swampy *bañados* overgrown with tall, cutting, reed-like grasses which made them almost impenetrable.

The positions of the Paraguayans seemed strong enough at this place to defy any assault by the enemy.

On the morning of September 1, 1866, five Brazilian iron-clads steamed up the river to the west of Palm Island, anchored below Fort Curupaiti and began to bombard the batteries at this place. These armored vessels were:

«Bahia» of 140 horsepower and armed with two 150 pound cannons.

«Brasil» of 250 horsepower with 11 guns.

«Barroso» of 130 horsepower with 6 guns.

«Rio de Janeiro» of 130 horsepower and 6 guns.

«Lima Barros» of 300 horsepower with 4 150 pound guns.

The brisk cannonade from the iron clads, promptly responded to by the shore batteries, accomplished very little. The breastworks were only slightly damaged. The guns and the cannoneers of the Paraguayan batteries were sufficiently protected by traverses thickly covered with lianas and this elastic covering resisted admirably the impact of the hostile projectiles.



The Angostura
Battle between Brazilian Monitors and Paraguayan Batteries.

The damage sustained by the Paraguayans through this bombardment, which continued for three days, consisted only in the destruction of one gun,—a damage out of all proportion to the enormous amount of ammunition wasted by the allies.

Only now, after the Brazilian vessels had advanced so far for the first time and were exposed to the fire from Curuzú in their rear, did the allies, to their surprise, become aware of the existence of this fort.

Nor were the soldiers of Curuzú less amazed, when on the 1st of September, shortly after the passage of the ironclads, they witnessed the approach of a numerous fleet of steamers which anchored on the west side of Palm Island and made preparations for the disembarkation of troops.

Major Sayas at once ordered 700 sharp-shooters into the timbered foreground along the river to prevent and oppose any attempted landing of troops.

A number of small boats, manned with Brazilian infantry soon came around the lower point of the island and endeavored to approach the eastern bank of the river. They were received by a hot fire from the thickets which forced them to retreat in great haste.

Three gunboats forthwith left the protecting shelter of the island and hurled a shower of grape, and cannister and shrapnel into the woods which soon silenced the musketry fire of the Paraguayans.

Covered by the guns of the vessels, 12,000 allied troops, mostly Brazilians, gradually succeeded in effecting a landing.

This army corps, lead by General Porto Alegre, was ordered by the commander in chief to assault and capture Fort Curupaiti and now found themselves suddenly face to face with Fort Curuzú of the existence of which, they had had not the least suspicion.

The landing of the troops was difficult and hazardous. The troops first coming ashore had to construct breastworks and abatis from bushes, branches and trees to procure some shelter from the deadly fire of the Paraguayans hidden in the woods and thickets. The breastworks and abatis were extended by degrees to afford room for the whole corps with its numerous field guns.

The space on shore into which the Brazilians were huddled together, was extremely limited in extent.

The gunboats could only fire at an elevated range over the heads of the Brazilians and, in consequence, the woods again became alive with Paraguayan sharpshooters, who, from safe covers behind trees and stumps, sustained a withering fire into the dense masses of their enemies, driving them to the very verge of despair.

The Brazilians were compelled to encamp over night at the place where they had landed, as it was too late in the day to reconnoitre the vicinity.

The musketry fire continued unabated the whole night.

The woods were ransacked the next morning to discover large bodies of Paraguayan troops. None were found, only scattered sharpshooters who easily eluded pursuit.

The forest was set afire towards eleven o'clock in the morning.

The crackling and roaring of the flames as they leaped from tree to tree, the crashing of falling trunks, the scorching heat and the dense, suffocating smoke heightened the terrors of the fiercely raging battle. The Brazilians sought to protect themselves from the fire by felling trees and by digging trenches and the Paraguayan sharpshooters returned to the fort.

Then, when the fury of the flames had spent itself, when the Brazilians rushed from the chaos to breathe the fresh pure air,—a deafening crash as if the firmament was rent asunder.

The firing ceased on both sides as if stopped by a common signal and a stillness of death momentarily hovered over the scene.

The proud ironclad «Rio de Janeiro» opposite Curuzú, rose above the surface of the river amidst a cloud of smoke and steam and surging, boiling waves, broke amidship and sank slowly to the bottom. An exploding torpedo had destroyed the ship. Fifty-three men out of a crew of 115 perished in the catastrophe and among them the Captain Mariz Barros the commander of the vessel.

About 60 of the crew attempted to save themselves by swimming. The gunboat «Ivahy» rushed along to pick up the men. The Paraguayans opened a galling fire on the «Ivahy»

and on the helpless men struggling with death in the river. A shell penetrated the boilers of the gunboat, killing four firemen by the scalding steam.

An outcry of rage and revenge rose from the thousands of Brazilian throats when the troops witnessed this inhuman conduct of the Paraguayans.

The soldiers were exhausted from fighting the fire and from struggling with the Paraguayans; the territory to the east of Curuzú had to be reconnoitred before an attack could be ordered on the fort. General Porto Alegre therefore, ordered his army to bivouac beyond the range of the cannons of Curuzú.

It was a very troublesome task to bring up the guns. The draught animals refused to wade through the hot ashes and to pass the burning stumps. The cannoneers were forced to harness themselves to the gun carriages and to drag them to their designated places,

Protecting covers for the batteries had been constructed during the night and at dawn of day on the 3rd day of September the Brazilians were ready to open fire on the south side of Fort Curuzú,

General Porto Alegre had made the following dispositions for the contemplated attack :

«General Fontes with a column of 6000 men infantry will pass around the south end of the lagune, which extends to the east of the fort, then march along the eastern run of the lagune, wade through its northern end and then make a bayonet charge on the fort from the north. The artillery ceases firing the moment Fontes commences the assault and General Carvalho, with the rest of the infantry, simultaneously and vigorously attacks the whole south front of the Paraguayan position.

The batteries began to hurl their projectiles against the fort at day-break and General Fontes, as ordered, marched around the south end of the lagune with his batallions. Then well hidden by the forest, he passed along the east edge and finally reached a ford, covered with four feet of water but with a solid bottom. The soldiers threw off their clothes, waded through the lagune and at the opposite bank encountered a wall and a ditch, which like an enceinte, encircled the fort.

The Paraguayans did not expect an attack from the north; they anticipated the danger from the opposite side and their forces were mainly crouching behind the southern breastworks. They were dumbfounded when they perceived the Brazilians sweeping across the northern wall, They were dismayed and broke into wild flight, some running towards Fort Curupaiti and others to Curuzú, where they made a stand and opened a destructive fire on the attacking column.

Fortunately for the allies, only one gun was placed on that side. Nearly all the cannons of the fort were pointed toward the river.

Within a few minutes after the time when General Fontes had captured the northern wall, General Carvalho dashed across the intrenchments in the southern front.

The two generals at once united their forces and formed them into three assaulting columns, which attacked the fort simultaneously from the north, the east and the south. The Brazilians charged, scaled the ramparts in the face of a murderous fire and engaged in a hand to hand struggle with the desperate Paraguayans within the fort. The latter defended themselves with such stubborn heroism that the victory hung in the balance for some time, but the marked numerical superiority of the Brazilians prevailed at last. They crowded into the fort, drove the brave Paraguayans into the eastern bastion and disarmed them.

Scarcely had this been done, when the rejoicing and dancing of the Brazilians, intoxicated with victory, was suddenly interrupted by a terrific detonation. The powder magazine of the bastion, where the Paraguayans were huddled together, had exploded. The ground was immediately strewn with mutilated corpses and torn and bloody human limbs.

General Fontes quickly collected 1200 of his troops and pursued the fleeing enemy to the very walls of Curupaiti, where General Porto Alegre's order to return at once to Curuzú overtook him. If the energetic and impetuous brigadier had received this order half an hour later he would have captured Curupaiti, which was almost open and defenceless to the south-east and occupied by a small garrison. The Paraguayan position on the Estero Rojas would have been outflanked and the river opened for the fleet up to Humaitá.

General Porto Alegre, with his troops, moved into camp on the plateau south of Guruzú and threw up intrenchments around the same.

The losses of the Paraguayans on this day amounted to 750 dead, 1800 wounded, 31 prisoners and 13 guns; that of the Brazilians to 1200 dead and wounded, among them 59 officers.

Curuzú had fallen, but it was necessary to capture the far more important Curupaiti before the allies could proceed to invest the Fortress Humaitá.



The Tithe of the Tenth.

The excitement of the Marshal-President, produced by the heavy cannonade which, during the first three days of September raged on his right flank, and the rasping, jarring noise of which did not act on his weak nerves like the dulcet notes of a symphony, changed to utter dejection when, on the morning of Sept. 4th., General Diaz reported to him the loss of Curuzú.

He saw himself outflanked already on his right. He knew very well that Curupaiti, the chief support of the right wing, although surrounded by formidable natural obstacles and barriers, was not fortified strong enough on the land side to resist a determined attack. Was it good generalship to weaken other points on the line by sending reinforcements to this port? No! It was highly probable that the enemies, with an attack on Curupaiti, would simultaneously develop their main strength, if not against the well fortified centre, at least against the more exposed left wing. The distance between the threatened points on the left and right flanks, on a direct line and not regarding the deviations produced by intervening swamps, amounted to ten kilometers. And yet it was an absolute necessity to hold the fort on the river bank.

With his hands folded behind, with head bowed down and with restless, nervous steps Lopez walked to and fro in his room at his residence in Paso Pocu.

Various schemes flashed across his brain but he rejected them one after the other as impracticable and incapable of execution.

The door was flung open suddenly. Elisa Lynch, charming and captivating, entered the apartment and rushed to her lover.

«My lord, I have learned of the misfortune which befell us yesterday but the loss of an unimportant place cannot be considered irreparable. What have the enemies gained by the capture of Curuzú, which, by the way, they took at a tremendous sacrifice, as long as Curupaiti is still ours? I should judge that your main care should be to strengthen this place thoroughly in the shortest time possible.»

«Very true, Madame!» Lopez replied, resting his black eyes inquiringly on his beautiful mate. «I recognize very well the necessity of the construction of new fortifications, but the question, how and where to erect and arm them is what perplexes me.—Or does my sagacious little councillor he added with an ironical smile,» know of a plan which would answer all demands and be adapted to the topography of the ground?»

O Yes! exclaimed Elisa Lynch. «I know of such a plan, but its invention is not mine, it belongs to George Thompson, your Colonel of engineers.* It is the identical plan which the Colonel submitted to you on a former occasion, but which you then rejected from reasons incomprehensible to me as the plan covers every requisite for an effective defence of the position. If I may advise you, I would suggest that the best thing to do would be to commission Colonel Thompson with the execution of these plans.»

*(Note).—The only foreign soldier who served with the Paraguayan army or was permitted within its camp was an Englishman, Thompson, a splendid officer of engineers, to whom Lopez was indebted for the rapid construction of those intrenchments and fortifications in the field, which excited the surprise, admiration and chagrin of the allies. Lopez often persisted with justified pride in saying he alone with his Guarani's, carried on a war against the far stronger allies whose camps swarmed with hired European officers. It is true, Lopez employed some other intelligent and educated Europeans, but they did not belong to the army. Here is a list of them.

Dr. Stuart (Englishman) surgeon-general.—Dr. Skinner (Englishman) Lopez' private physician.—Mr. Vulpi, (Englishman) civil engineer, constructor of the rail-road from Asuncion to Paraguari and employed during the war in

The Marshal-President, in the mean time, stepped up to the table, covered with files of documents, and after a little search picked up a paper which he examined attentively for some minutes.

«You are quite right, Madame !» he exclaimed with glittering eyes. «The plan is excellent ! We must now exert all our powers in the execution of these works as projected.» «Captain Rivarola» he addressed the adjutant, who, in answer to the call of the bell, had entered the room, «tell Colonel Thomson to report to me in half an hour.»

After the adjutant had departed and Lopez had walked up and down the room several times, he stopped suddenly before Eliza Lynch, who reclined negligently in a cane chair and observed him closely with her keen eyes.

A dark cloud hovered over his features when he finally asked in a suppressed, harsh voice : «And what will be the impression which the news of the capture of Curuzú will make on the people and on the army ? This loss cannot be diplomatically demonstrated away like a defeat in the field. It is too obvious ! Until now, the troops, with the exception of the garrison at Curupaiti, know nothing of the matter, as all verbal or written intercourse between the batallions, except in things strictly pertaining to the service, is prohibited and treated and punished as high treason. No report of the affair has yet been sent to Asuncion as it perplexes me how to put it in the mildest light possible. What is to be done ? »

The fascinating woman smilingly shrugged her round, marble shoulders.

«I think the matter may easily be arranged» she responded in a mellow, harmonious voice. «The blame for the defeat must not be thrown on the whole garrison. One batallion must be charged with cowardice and held responsible for the disaster and must be punished with the utmost severity. The article for the «Semanario» I shall write myself and submit it to you for your approbation. I hope it will satisfy you. It will be necessary, furthermore, to acquaint the army with the loss

building roads and bridges.—Fischer von Treuenfeld (German) director of the telegraphic service.—Mr. Mastermann (Englishman) druggist and manufacturer of torpedos.—Colonel Wisner von Morgenstern (Austrian) director of public buildings, but who was not with the army during the war.—The engineers and machinists on the few armed Paraguayan vessels and about 30 employes in the Arsenal at Asuncion were also Englishmen.

of Curuzú through a general order intimating, at the same time, that the miserable cowards will be justly punished at once. «And now, dearest, far well!» added the bewitching woman, when the adjutant announced Colonel Thompson. «In two hours I shall return with my composition. Hasta la vista.» (Until I shall see you again.)

Hardly had Madame departed when Colonel Thompson entered to have a long consultation with the potent ruler of Paraguay.

The colonel's countenance bore the impress of pride and contentment when he left the Marshal-President's house an hour afterwards.

Elisa Lyneh, meanwhile, received the visit of General Diaz in her residence near the headquarters. He gave her full details of the capture of Curuzú, throwing the whole blame of the disaster on the 10. batallion, which had never been under fire before and had hurriedly and in a cowardly manner abandoned the intrenchments at the first onset of the enemy. The commander of the batallion, in the vain endeavor to rally his fleeing men, had fallen before the charging Brazilians.

Madame then wrote the report for the «Semenario» submitted the article for her lord's inspection who approved it and transmitted it half an hour later by telegraph to Asuncion.

The garrison of Curupaiti was increased to 5,000 men within a few days. They were employed to construct the formidable intrenchments in accordance with the plans of Colonel Thompson.

Several thousands of Paragnayans were gathered in the woods to the south of the fort on the night of the 7. and 8. of September. A line of outposts and sentinels was quietly established to guard the work about to be commenced. Colonel Thompson, aided by the light of lanterns began to trace the work, a laborious and difficult undertaking on account of the dense, thorny thickets. A large number of trees had to be felled over a distance of a thousand paces before the tracings could be fairly established.

The men, in spite of the darkness were put to work at once on the trenches. Complete silence was enforced. They were requested to make no noise with their spades and shovels. The work was toilsome and offered uncommon, almost

insurmountable obstacles. Trees and shrubbery had to be removed and the hard, clay soil could scarcely be broken with the pickaxes. But the brave Paraguayans worked with assiduity and with almost superhuman efforts continued their laborious task.

It is almost inconceivable that the Brazilians never had the least suspicion of these labors, although the camp of General Porto Alegre was only 3000 paces away from the new works. This general refused to place outposts among the swamps as it would expose his men too much and no reconnoitering party of the allied army, for the next three weeks, advanced to the point where the enemy was busy incessantly, night and day, to erect fortifications. The allies were totally ignorant of the defences erected here by Lopez.

The morning of September 10. was clear and mild, the sun shone bright and clear and not a cloud dotted the blue vault of heaven.

Intense silence reigned on the plateau to the east of the batteries of Curupaiti, although the place was filled with troops.

Six batallions and detachments from the other batallions and regiments, all fully armed and equipped, formed three sides of a large square. On the fourth side, in two ranks with the officers in front, stood the 10. batallion. Officers and men were without their arms.

The peculiar noise of rattling and clanking chains became audible. A prisoner, in the uniform of major with the heavy «grillos» fastened to his feet, advanced and was escorted by four men to the front of the 10. batallion.

It was Major Sayas, the former commander of Fort Curuzú.

A sharp, loud command broke the silence.

The troops shouldered arms and a few moments after, General Diaz, followed by a number of priests and a platoon of soldiers with loaded guns, stepped into the square.

The general advanced silently toward the disarmed officers in front of the 10. batallion. He carried in his hand a number of straws and held them out to the officers to draw lots.

Two of them had drawn the longest straws.

They were shot in front of the batallion after brief confession which lasted only a few seconds.

The victims had scarcely fallen, when a sergeant advanced to the surviving officers, tore the insignia of rank from their caps and flung them at their feet,

The public degradation of the officers of the 10. batallion to the rank of common soldiers was accomplished.

Then General Diaz walked along the ranks, counting from one to nine and ordered every tenth man to step forward until he had 61 soldiers devoted to death.

These, after being shriven in haste by the priests, were ranged in a row.

A batallion got «ready!»

«Apuntad!» — «Fuego!» (Aim! Fire!)

The volley crashed and smoke of powder filled the air.

Sixty-four Paraguayans, pierced and torn by bullets, some dead and some writhing in convulsions, covered the blood-stained soil.

Some soldiers stepped up to the wriggling mass and where they noticed signs of life in any one of the victims, they placed the muzzle of their guns to his ear and ended his pain by the «tiro de gracia» (coup de grace) as it is called in the military parlance of South America.

Such was the cruel fate of the tithe of the tenth batallion. They suffered death because their batallions had been accused of having been the first to run from the enemy.

The surviving soldiers were distributed among the other batallions, The 10. batallion was erased from the army lists. It has never been reorganized again.

The work of the construction of the intrenchments before Curupaiti progressed rapidly due to the indefatigable efforts of the soldiers, but Lopez, fearing an attack from the enemy at any moment, was racked with uneasiness. The enemy would certainly have the advantage on his side if he made an assault before the new fortifications were completed.

Madame Lynch, by her shrewd advice, managed to secure ample time to finish the intrenchments.

It was a laborious task for her to induce the Marshal-President to open negotiations with General Mitre for a personal conference. She urged the strongest reasons, convinced him of the necessity of such a step and finally overcame his mortal dread of ambush, treason and assassination. Quickly resolved at last, he wrote the following lines :

To His Excellency the Commander in chief of the Allied Army, President-General Don Bartolomé Mitre,

I have the honor to invite Your Excellency to a personal conference between our outposts and leave it to Your Excellency to appoint the day and the hour thereof.

May the Lord keep Your Excellency many years.

Francisco Solano Lopez.

It was at the dusk of the evening of the same day when the execution of the tithe of the tenth batallion had taken place, that the Marshal-President, in nervous, feverish excitement sent the letter under a flag of truce from his left flank to the Argentine camp.

The messenger was accompanied by fifty to sixty officers. It had grown dark in the meantime rendering the color of the flag quite undistinguishable to the hostile outposts. The large body of men advancing upon them looked suspicious. They opened fire and the messenger had to return without having executed his mission.

The Marshal-President was at first confounded at the unexpected failure but he recognized the fact that he had sent the flag of truce too late in the day and, obeying the counsel of Madame Lynch, concluded to renew the attempt on the next day.



The Conference.

The Argentine outposts were greatly agitated up on the morning of September 11th. A Paraguayan, under a flag of truce, had arrived, bearing a letter from President Lopez to General Mitre, which had been despatched at once to its destination and the messenger remained awaiting an answer.

The messenger was a handsome, stately man with dark whiskers framing a serious countenance and dressed in the becoming red uniform of a captain.

He was hospitably received by the Argentine Officers, but courteously, coldly and firmly declined the kindly extended invitation to participate in a good breakfast or join them in drink-

ing the hot mate.* He even refused cigars and when an officer offered him one he drew out a well filled cigar case, tendered the contents to the officers in return and remarked dryly: that the Marshal-President supplied his officers and men with an abundance of tobacco and cigars. Then he seated himself in the shade of a Yatai-palm and answered every question with a stereotyped «no sé» (I dont know.)

The man, like all Paragnayans, manifested the greatest reserve.



General Bartolomé Mitre
President of the Argentine Republic and Chief of the Allied Army

General Mitre, as soon as he had received the letter and noted its contents, sent word to the Brazilian General Polydoro, and to General Flores, the commander of the Orientals, re-

*—Paraguayan tea: a decoction from the leaves of the Yerba mate. A favorite drink in South America.

questing them to meet him for the purpose of a discussion of the writing and of the answer to be sent.

The momentary pause which ensued after General Mitre, in his soft, calm voice, had read the letter to his companions, was interrupted by the commander in chief, pointing out, in a lengthy speech, the possible and probable advantages arising from granting the request of Lopez, emphasizing the fact that it would not interfere with the prosecution of the war.

General Polydoro silently shook his head.

The old caudillo (chieftain) Flores, after humming and hawing a little, stroking his gray imperial and rolling his eyes like two fire-balls, responded :

«I do not believe that the meeting requested by Lopez will have any favorable result whatever. The main condition of our treaty of alliance is that we will not lay down our arms until he abdicates and leaves the country, and this, with his notorious ambition he will never consent to do. His patriotism does not extend far enough to cause him to sacrifice his own selfish interests for the welfare of his country. Nevertheless, I am in favor of granting his request as it cannot hurt us to learn what the fox purposes to do. As he will come to the conference in person, in spite of his distrust of everybody, what he has to propose must be something conciliatory and decisive.»

«Gentlemen!» began General Polydoro, «I do solemnly declare that, any negotiations whatever with this Paraguayan Francisco Solano Lopez will come to nought. When on account of the sickness of General Osorio, his Majesty the Emperor appointed me commander of the Brazilian forces he particularly charged me at the same time: to drive Lopez from Paraguay and to enter into no negotiations with him. To a Brazilian General there exists not now a Lopez as chief of the Republic of Paraguay and I cannot negotiate with him. If Your Excellency «turning to the commander in chief,» is determined, however, to grant him a private meeting, I shall raise no objection and I promise, furthermore, that during its continuance, the Brazilian army will make no hostile demonstrations.

Mitre added a few more words and then sat down to write the following answer which he read to the two generals :

Headquarters of the Allied Army,
September 11. 1866.

Having had the honor of receiving your communication of the present date, according to which you ask for a personal interview with me between our respective outposts, I reply that I accept the proposed meeting and that to-morrow morning at nine o'clock I shall be with our outposts at Paso Yataity-Cora. I shall leave my escort of 20 men on the knolls where my farthest outposts are placed and proceed to the ground where the meeting may take place if it is convenient to Your Excellency.

May the Lord keep Your Excellency many years !

Bartolomé Mitre.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon and the time of the siesta had not yet passed, when a number of persons, whispering one with another, were gathered in the cool office of the Marshal-President, while the latter, his hands folded behind, walked up and down with rapid steps.

He had received General Mitre's answer ten minutes ago and those present : General Barrios, his brother-in-law; Resquin, quartermaster general; Bishop Palacios and Madame Lynch, had been advised of its contents.

The whole afternoon he had been beset with doubts and perplexities as to how he should act in case his request was granted. He had secretly hoped it would be refused. It had been conceded and his hope was dashed to the ground.

What must he do ? His person was the pivot on which the war revolved. What was known to the whole world through the indiscretion of Earl Russel, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs who had, in a confidential manner, through the Oriental Minister Carlos de Castro, a copy of the treaty of alliance signed at Buenos Aires on May 1st 1865 and had published its contents in the Blue-book, notwithstanding the mutual agreement of absolute secrecy as contained in paragraph 18 thereof.

«What is more natural,» Lopez calculated, according to his way of thinking and judging, which excluded all trust and faith if they interfered with his aims and purposes, «what is more natural than that they should prepare an ambush, make me a prisoner and thus at one blow end the war ?»



Marshal-President Francisco Lopez
Supremo of Paraguay

Those present surmised what thoughts were agitating the soul of the Supremo but no one ventured to suggest anything before the ruler had stated his own views.

«General Resquin» he called out in a harsh voice, «to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock you will take the battalion of rifle-guards to the Paso Yataiti-Corá. They will go with loaded arms and you will hide them in the high grass on the edge of the lagoon so that they can be on hand at any moment if I should need them. I shall have a conference to-morrow with General Mitre near that place, and who knows, but the enemies may want to improve the opportunity to seize my person, You General Barrios, besides the escort of 25 men of the horse-guard, who will accompany me, will select 80 resolute and determined officers, who will follow me to the Paso but remain there. These men will know how to act in case of treachery.»

Then he seated himself at his desk to write a few lines to General Mitre, which letter was handed to Captain Ramos for delivery.

It said:

Headquarters Paso Pocu, Sept. 11th 1866.

Have just had the honor to receive Your Excellency's answer in which the conference, proposed by me this morning is accepted. Thanking Your Excellency for the acceptance thereof, I may state that, I agree to the manner in which the conference is to take place and shall not fail to be on hand at the time stated.

The Lord preserve Your Excellency many years.

Francisco Solano Lopez

The precautions, desired and ordered by Lopez, had all been taken the next morning when the Marshal-President entered his open carriage, drawn by four horses to drive as far as the intrenchments.

He was in a state of nervous, feverish, painful excitement. What fate may the next few hours have in store for him! Possibly, he was facing treachery and death.

He had dressed with extreme care. He wore his best, scarlet, gold-embroidered uniform, with the epaulets detached on this occasion, pants of white leather, spurred top-boots reaching to the knees, a Marshal's cap on his head and over the shoulders a red, gold-embroidered poncho.*

His escort, with their rich, neat, clean uniforms and the gigantic stature of the men, made an imposing impression on the allies.

A swarm of about 80 officers, in fatigue dress, followed the escort. They rode along without any order and discipline and remained behind when they arrived at the Paso Yataity-Corá.

When Lopez reached the outer trenches he descended from the carriage and mounted his horse. Then the courage, which he had mustered up with great effort until now, seemed to vanish. He contemplated his situation with horror. His face was as pale as death. He demanded a glass of port-wine before he mounted his horse and drank it at a gulp before he swung himself into the saddle.

*—A woolen blanket with a slit in the centre, large enough for the head to pass through. It is very much worn in all Latin-America.

The stimulating drink calmed and strengthened his nerves evidently: he rode forward without hesitation.

General Mitre, with an escort of 20 men and followed by a suite of officers, reached the low knolls on the allied side, at the same moment.

The two escorts halted instantly.

The two Presidents approached each other, dismounted and saluted each other in military fashion, while their orderlies took the horses to lead them back.

Mitre, after the first exchange of the ordinary and customary courtesies, beckoned an adjutant and ordered him to bring a table and some chairs and to invite Generals Flores and Polydoro to be present at the meeting.

Tables, chairs and writing utensils were brought.

The adjutant returned in about a quarter of an hour and reported: that General Flores would be at the meeting presently but that General Polydoro begged to be excused, saying: that as the commander in chief conducted the negotiations in person, his presence would be superfluous and must therefore politely decline the invitation.

General Flores, dressed in gala-uniform came to the conference a few minutes later. The neat, superb appearance of Flores contrasted favorably with that of the plain Mitre.

The latter wore only the blue-white sash with the gold embroidered escutcheon of the Argentine Republic over his plain uniform and his head was covered by a black, low-crowned, soft, felt hat.

The conversation between Flores and Lopez became animated and heated at once when the latter accused the Dictator of the Banda Oriental of being the only cause of the war since he had invited the aid of the Brazilians in the civil war of Uruguay.

General Flores, this passionate, excitable, effervescent Gaucho, responded in harsh terms: that he was as jealous of the independence of his country as anyone else, that he forbade the utterance of such charges in his presence, that Lopez alone was responsible for this war and this bloodshed, since, to gratify his inordinate ambition he had recklessly provoked the war by two acts of violence and injustice which found no parallel in history.



General Flores
President of the Republic Uruguay.

This conversation, without a conciliatory word, continued in an irritating and irascible manner for some time and it required all the diplomatic skill and tact of the adroit and sagacious Mitre to prevent a serious rupture between the enraged generals.

At last they seated themselves. Lopez declared that he was filled with an anxious desire that means might be found to procure an honorable peace between the belligerent governments. Blood had been shed enough to wash away the mutual complaints and it would be in the interest of all parties concerned to terminate this the most sanguinary of all South American wars and to inaugurate an era of peace, sincere friendship and equal honor.

Lopez had scarcely finished his remark when General Flores sprang to his feet, made a cold, stiff bow to the Marshal-

President, leaped on his horse and galloped off apparently in a state of great exasperation.

Lopez looked somewhat abashed at the brusque behavior of the Oriental General, but Mitre ignored it entirely and proceeded directly to respond to the wish expressed by the Supremo.

«I must remark to Your Excellency, that I am at the head of the allied army as a general and not in the capacity of President and Chief of the Argentine Republic. The government is in the hands of the Vice-President, Dr. Marcos Paz during the campaign. It is within the province of the allied Governments only to conclude and arrange a peace with Your Excellency. I can only grant an armistice according to my authority, which is circumscribed by narrow and well-defined limits which I cannot transgress under any condition.»

«And what may be the conditions under which Your Excellency will consent to an extended armistice?» inquired Lopez with intense interest.

Mitre fixed his eyes on the Marshal-President with a steady gaze; then the long lids sank until the black eyes were half veiled and he replied in his cold, calm voice:

«If Your Excellency were ready to declare, that, as soon as you have placed the government in the hands of the Vice-President of Paraguay, you would go to Europe and remain there a few years for the purpose of resting from the fatigues of the campaign, then the Allied Powers would see no obstacles in the way of negotiations for a permanent peace with the new Government.»

Lopez blanched perceptibly at this proposition. It required some moments before he could collect himself and recover sufficient composure, to answer:

«I must declare to Your Excellency,» he began in a cool and collected manner, «that the discussion concerning a change in the government is out of the question as it is an insult to the honor and an injury to the interests of Paraguay. I must, furthermore, call your attention to the constitution of the Republic, according to which the Vice-President is appointed by the President and the former cannot assume the reins of the government during the life-time of the latter. The functions of the Vice-President consist merely in calling together the

electoral Congress. I can assure Your Excellency that the Republic will never soil its fair fame and honor by the deposition of its President who depends upon its existence neither will it consent that he be banished from the scenes of his patriotic devotion. «For my part» he continued his eyes flashing with conscious pride, «I will under no condition be separated from my country and shall share with it the fate which Providence may have in store for us!»

«I honor the sentiments of Your Excellency and of the country,» responded Mitre. «There remains nothing for us to do but to put in writing the proposition of Your Excellency, to forward the same without delay to the allied Governments and I shall abide by their decision.

Lopez assented to this.

No tree was near and the rays of the burning sun fell fiercely on the open space.

Two orderlies were beckoned and they came to hold umbrellas over the chiefs engaged in writing as a protection from the sun.

The documents, when completed, were compared, slightly modified and then signed by the two commanders in chief.

The business of the conference was finished.

General Mitre ordered some cognac and water for refreshment.

Lopez then introduced his two brothers Benigno and Venancio and General Barrios, his brother-in-law, to the chief commander of the enemy and the latter in turn presented his brother Emilio and the Generals Gelly y Obes and Hornos to the Marshal-President.

The two Presidents parted with the mutual assurance of the highest esteem and exchanged their whips as a remembrance of that day.

Lopez was terribly disappointed. He had fancied Mitre more accessible to his ideas. His spies* at Buenos Aires and Montevideo had communicated to him that the people of the

*)—Lopez had in his pay a number of skilful and active agitators and agents at Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Rosario, Entre Rios and Corrientes. They did effective service to his cause through correspondence, speeches and newspaper articles and they reported to him everything of importance transpiring. These reports were sent to Corrientes, from whence the Minister of the province, a traitor transmitted them by hired Indians, through the Gran Chaco to the headquarters of the Marshal-President.

Argentine Republic were growing heartily tired of the war and that petitions, asking for peace, were put in circulation. But on the very points upon which he could make no concessions:—abdication and voluntary exile, he had found General Mitre firm and obdurate.

Lopez was much cast down in spirit when he returned to his intrenchment and again entered the carriage. On the way back to headquarters he stopped at a solitary house on the road, where Madame Lynch and Bishop Palacio awaited him. He took breakfast with them and they exerted themselves to encourage him and to rouse his drooping spirits.

Returned to Paso Poquí, the Marshal-President sent for Colonel Thompson to receive his report in regard to the progress made in the erection of the fortifications at Curupaiti.

The report must have been highly satisfactory to the Supremo, for, from that moment he was himself again and his old confidence returned.

General Mitre, upon his return to headquarters, sent a circular to the Generals of the allied army, informing them of the main facts of his conference with Lopez, concluding by saying: that he had stated to the Marshal-President that he would leave the matter to the allied Powers and would be controlled by their decisions.

The white flags at the outposts were lowered towards evening of that day and Mitre, with the rest of the 1st and 2nd Argentine division embarked at Itapira for Curuzú to make there the necessary preparation for the assault on Curupaiti.

From this place he sent the following letter to Lopez.

Headquarters at Curuzú, Sept. 14th 1866.

I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that, in accordance with our agreement, I have acquainted the allied Governments with Your Excellency's conciliatory propositions which you made me on the 12th inst. at Yataity-Corá.

As I declared to you on that occasion, this does not in the least change the existing condition of the war.

The Lord keep Your Excellency many years.

Bartolomé Mitre

The following day Mitre received the following answer from the Marshal-President, which was delivered under a flag of truce.

Headquarters at Paso Pocu, Sept. 15th 1866,

Acknowledging the receipt of the letter which Your Excellency honored me in sending to me from your headquarters at Curuzú, by which letter I am informed that Your Excellency had come to an agreement with your allies to acquaint the allied Governments with the object of our conference on the 12th at Yataity-Corá, I am not alarmed at the idea that, for my part, I have made the last attempt to come to an understanding and to stop further bloodshed. I have the satisfaction to know that, by this act, I demonstrate to the world, which is observing us, that I am actuated by humanity, a noble patriotism and a high esteem of the enemy who is fighting my country.

The Lord preserve Your Excellency many years.

Francisco Solano Lopez.

A young captain of the national guard, a lawyer and a member of a prominent family of Buenos Aires, was appointed by Mitre to make a reconnaissance of the difficult ground in front of Curupaiti. General Mitre was probably induced by a well sounding name to make this selection of a young officer for a task which required military education, skill and experience of a high order.

Subsequent events will show whether or not General Mitre committed a grave mistake.»



With the Outposts.



Many prominent Paraguayan families were banished from their country during the administration of Dr. Francia, but more so during that of his successor President Carlos Antonio López. Their estates were confiscated and they, as well as their descendants were forbidden to return to their homes on pain of death.

The love of their native country, the intense longing for their old homes, the bitter hate of the tyrants and the burning desire for revenge on the cruel despot who successively terrorized Paraguay, could not be extinguished in the hearts of the exiles.

«Death to the tyrants!» «Liberty for our enslaved brothers!» «Restitution of our stolen estates!» were the solemn vows which these fugitives, as residents of the Argentine Republic and of the Banda Oriental exchanged at every meeting.

This fierce hatred was transmitted from parents to children and readily absorbed by the latter. When in consequence of sudden, violent and unprovoked seizure of Argentine steamers by Paraguayan men-of-war in the harbor of Corrientes the triple alliance of Brazil, Banda Oriental and the Argentine Republic was formed in the city of Buenos Aires on May 1st. 1865, the exiles saw their opportunity for revenge and redress. The fugitive Paraguayans, residing in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Rosario and Corrientes, assembled in the Argentine capital and appointed a committee. This committee put itself in communication with General Mitre, the commander in chief of the allied army and prayed permission to organize a legion of the sons of exiled Paraguayans which, under the command of the general but under the Paraguayan flag, might battle for the liberation of Paraguay from the yoke of the oppressor Lopez.

The chief commander cheerfully accepted the proposition, particularly, when the committee assured him that the soldiers of Lopez would desert to them in masses as soon as the allied forces crossed the boundary of the Paraguayan Republic. The flag of the legion would demonstrate to them that the war was carried on solely against the despot but not against the people.

This assurance certainly seemed plausible.

The committee issued stirring appeals to the Paraguayan youths in the different cities, calling upon them to enlist in the ranks of the legion.

Four weeks later the legion with a strength of 480 men, well armed and equipped, offered its services to General Mitre.

Besides carrying the Paraguayan flag, this legion enjoyed the further privileges of electing its own officers and subalterns.

It was placed under the command of General Flores and placed in the van-guard at the commencement of the cam-

paign. It fought bravely and with distinction throughout the whole war.

But the hope, that the soldiers of Lopez would desert in large numbers to the legion as soon as the soil of Paraguay was invaded, was doomed to disappointment. The prisoners taken after this occurrence were far more hostile, bitter and defiant than those captured before.

It is self-evident that Lopez manifested a particularly bitter hatred toward this legion and he was informed that it fought under the Paraguayan flag against him.

He strenuously protested against this feature of the war before the representatives of the United States of North America, Chili, Peru and Bolivia, who were accredited at his capital. He pointed out to them that it was a disgraceful act, unworthy of a civilized nation, to permit the enlistment of degenerate sons of a nation with whom they were at war and to allow them with weapons in their hand and the sacred banner of their country waving above them, to invade and crush their native land which had expelled them.

The ministers reported the facts to their governments calling attention to the matter of the flag, whereupon protests were made at Rio de Janeiro and at Buenos Aires.

But the flag remained with the legion.

Many captured Paraguayans enlisted in the legion and it finally attained a strength of 360 men.

On the morning of September 11th 1866, after the request of the Marshal-President, made under a flag of truce, had been granted by the general of the allies, white flags were hoisted along the lines of the opposite outposts. Hostilities were strictly prohibited and free intercourse between the two armies was permitted.

Without any previous agreement these arrangements were made by both sides at the same time.

The instructions on the side of the Paraguayans were :

«All hostilities against the outposts of the enemy are forbidden. Visits to the hostiles are not permitted.

«If unarmed soldiers from the enemy's camp visit you, receive them pleasantly and hospitably, treat them to cigars and mate but to not become too intimate with them.

«Have your arms always in readiness for immediate use as you cannot be too cautious with these treacherous macacos.

«The different commanders of the guards at the outposts will be held responsible for the strict enforcement of this order.

Resquin, Brigadier General.



A Paraguayan Outpost.

A picket guard of 35 men under the command of Lieutenant Montiel, stationed on the southern edge of the forest near the Paco Gomez, was visited by a number of Argentine and Brazilian soldiers about three o'clock in the afternoon. The Paraguayans, camped around little fires, near the rifle-pits, cheerfully and courteously received their visitors.

These, clad in uniforms, shabby and worn but complete, contrasted favorably with the Paraguayans, who, with the exception of the commanding Lieutenant, were without shoes and trousers,—a veritable lot of «sansculottes.» Their whole dress consisted only of a red woollen blouse with black collar and trimmings, a belt with a cartridge box attached and a cap of leather, on the rim of which the national colors, red white and blue, were painted in oil. Their loaded guns, ready for use and within reach of the owners, were placed on the low earth-wall adjoining the ditch.

Hot mate, the favorite drink of South America, and cigars were cheerfully and freely offered by one side and as freely and thankfully accepted by the other.

They were soon engaged in a cheerful, harmless conversation, seasoned with wit and humor and accompanied by hearty, merry laughter.

And these groups of pleasantly chatting and joking soldiers had been deadly enemies only a few hours ago. The bitterness of the contest and the bloody battles were forgotten for a moment. To-day, these men were not grim adversaries but happy, contented men only.

Among the visitors was a sergeant of the Paraguayan legion in the allied army, by the name of Domingo Ruiz, who had ventured to come in a frivolous, foolhardy disregard of danger. He met several Paraguayans, whom he knew personally, among them Lieutenant Montiel, and he committed the indiscretion and folly to indulge in unguarded and unfavorable expressions concerning Lopez and the conditions in Paraguay.

He told them of the legion, which had joined the allies with the only purpose of freeing the country from the galling yoke of the bloodthirsty despot Lopez; what an easy and comfortable life he and his comrades enjoyed in the allied camp and that the Paraguayans now had the best opportunity to recover their lost liberties, if they only had the energy to avail themselves of it. He also mentioned his two friends, Lieutenant Lucindo Recalde and the Cabo Heraclio Lorianio, who had also enlisted with the legion.

The soldiers of the Marshal-President listened in silence to the words of their countryman. Not a word in controversy passed across their lips.

When they separated an hour later, sergeant Ruiz was invited by Lieutenant Montiel to repeat his visit the next day and to bring along with him Recalde and Lorianio, their mutual acquaintances.

Montiel reported the matter to General Resquin, mentioning particularly the inciting speeches made by Ruiz. Lopez, to whom everything, even the smallest incidents, was reported, directed Montiel to place himself in ambush with 20 men near the picket guard, on the morrow, to capture the legionaries dead or alive and to bring them to Paco Pocú where they would receive their just reward for their treason.

On the following day, the day of the conference between Mitre and Lopez, Ruiz, Recalde and Lorianio, without the least

apprehension of danger, went to the picket guard mentioned.

As the guard had been relieved at 8 o'clock in the morning, they found a new squad but had no cause to complain of their reception. Alferez Albarazin, in command of the squad, acted the amiable host and invited them to partake of a tender, juicy joint, with which they drank the strong caña, followed by the favorite mate.

The ensuing animated conversation was suddenly interrupted in a very unexpected manner.

Unanticipated, like a clap of thunder from a clear sky, the armed guards of the Marshal-President led by Montiel waving his sword, sprang from their ambush and dashed toward their unsuspecting victims seated on the ground. The three legionaries perceived instantly that it was a surprise, engineered by Lopez, to secure their capture.

They started to save themselves by a hasty flight. It was a desperate, almost impossible undertaking. They dispersed in different directions in order to divide their pursuers but their chances of escape were very slim. Two of them were captured after all three had been wounded more or less severely by the guard of the Supremo.

Only Lieutenant Luciano Recaldo managed to escape.

The fate that awaited the two prisoners Ruiz and Loriano was frightful and terrible to contemplate.

Taken before General Resquin at Paso Pocu, they were at once condemned «to be flogged to death.»

The judgment was executed without delay.

The unfortunate victims were stripped of their clothes, in front of the mayoria. They were then thrown on the ground, face downward, and each one held down by four men holding arms and legs.

There were present an adjutant, a bugler, and a number of soldiers furnished with lassos.

Upon a signal from the officer a soldier approached the condemned.

A second signal,—and the bugler began to execute a lively march and the sharp leather thongs of the lasso, keeping time with the music, began to descend with cruel force on the bare

backs of the deplorable victims of an inhuman judgment. The two soldiers were relieved at each thirtieth blow.

The backs of the unfortunate men presented a mass of raw, bloody, quivering flesh, after a few blows. Painful groans alternated with piercing shrieks of distress until both finally changed into a stentorons death-rattle. The quivering flesh rose in welts and gradually assumed the appearance of jelly.

The death-rattle became inaudible. No convulsions, no signs of life were visible in the torn and deformed bodies. But the lassos continued to descend until a young army surgeon approached and, after a superficial examination, pronounced life extinct.

The execution, which had lasted upward of an hour, was at an end and the corpses of the victims were taken away for interment.

This «flogging to death» was the punishment which Lopez inflicted on all those Paraguayans, who, at the surrender of Lieutenant-Colonel Estigarribia on the 18th day of September 1865, at Uruguayana, had been captured and who, escaping from the allies, tramping footsore and weary over circuitous roads, suffering untold privations in swamps, woods and plains, returned at last to their idolized Supremo. A death of brutal torture awaited them instead of praise and a kind reception as a reward for their faithfulness and loyalty.



Curupaiti.



The new intrenchments, which the Marshal-President caused to be erected at a distance of half a kilometer to the south of Fort Curupaiti, were finished. The right wing of these fortifications rested on the bank of the Rio Paraguay, here covered with almost impenetrable thickets. The left touched the large, mirey Laguna Lopez. This work, constructed with several projecting angles, was 2,000 paces in length and con-

sisted of an earth wall 9 feet wide and 7 feet high, with a protecting ditch. It was so arranged that its existence could not be observed from the hostile fleet.

The Fort Curupaiti itself was fortified by two additional, parallel trenches, each 18 feet wide and 15 feet deep and beyond the farthest ditch, by an abatis of branches 30 feet in width, defences so formidable and calculated to defy the boldest and most daring assault.

General Diaz was entrusted with the chief command and a garrison of 6,000 men was placed under his order.

The fort, armed with 56 cannons of heavy calibre, mostly 11- and 68 pounders, was commanded by Major Sayas. The court martial, which tried him on the charges brought against him on account of the loss of Curuzú, had cleared him. This is perhaps the first and only instance where a Paraguayan court martial, without coercion from Lopez, decided a case in accordance with the dictates of conscience and justice.

The infantry was commanded by Colonel Gonzalez.

Four batteries of twelve field guns in all, were mounted on the intrenchments in front.

A battery of two guns, under Captain Ortiz, covered the narrow strip of solid ground which, to the south-west, ran along the river bank.

Four cannons, under Captain Gil, swept the front, two others, under Captain Saguier, covered the Laguna Lopez and the remaining four guns, also pointed forward, were placed on the extreme left wing and commanded by Major Hermoza.

Actual flank attacks could not be expected on account of the natural obstacles of the ground.

General Mitre, who had come to Curuzú on September 13th with two divisions of Argentine troops, to reinforce the Brazilian army corps under General Porto Alegre, at once began to make his dispositions for the attack.

After having made a very careless and inefficient reconnaissance of the enemy's position, Mitre concluded to make the assault on the 20th but it had to be postponed on account of the heavy, drenching rains, which set in and continued for two days.

The sun rose clear and pleasant on the morning of the 22nd. The grey, heavy clouds had disappeared and the sky appeared in a garb of clearest and purest azure.

The fleet under Admiral Tamandaré began a spirited bombardment of Curupaiti very early in the morning, which was responded to promptly by a lively cannonade from the fort. The effect of the heavy Brazilian naval guns on the fort was nought. The Paraguayans, sheltered by the traverses, had suffered no losses at noon.

The attack by the land forces commenced at 12 o'clock.

Mitre's plan of battle was as follows :

The allied army, here 18,000 strong, makes the assault in five columns.

The right wing, composed of Argentine troops under the command of General Emilio Mitre, will wade through the northern part of the Laguna Lopez to a small peninsula projecting into the lagoon at that place and proceed to the attack.

The third column, 5,000 strong, composed in equal parts of Argentine and Brazilian troops, will form the centre and will put itself in motion a little while after the others. (It was intended that General Porto Alegre should command this column, but it was lead into the fire by the Argentine Colone-Rivas.)

The other two columns, composed of Brazilians, and led by General Fontes and Carvalho respectively, will constitute the left wing.

The attack will be made simultaneously along the whole line and will be supported by the fire of the field-artillery.

General Polydoro, with 30,000 men, will, from Tuyutu assault the Paraguayan defences at Paso Gomez and along the Estero Rojas.

Mitre's dispositions were perfectly correct in so far as he believed that the works in his front, recently constructed, were the walls and intrenchments of Fort Curupaiti.

He addressed his troops in an inspiring harangue shortly before the commencement of the action, manifesting the utmost confidence in its success.

The signal for the attack was given.

The infantry, supplied with ladders and gabions, advanced in splendid style, although greeted with a destructive hailstorm

of cannister, grape and musket balls; but the soft, spongy ground rendered it exceedingly difficult and toilsome to bring the field-guns into position.

The Argentines, under General Emilio Mitre, a brother of the commander in chief, had to perform the severest and most hazardous task. They were exposed to the raking fire from the hostile batteries on the eastern border of the Laguna Lopez, of the existence of which they were perfectly unaware.

At the same time, while the Argentine and the central column struggled through almost impassable swamps, lagunes and quagmires, the Brazilians, on the left wing, advanced along the narrow strip of solid ground but were received by a withering artillery fire from the intrenchments.

Yet, the attack of the allies was a complete success along the whole line, notwithstanding the heavy losses sustained and the almost insurmountable obstacles of the ground over which they charged.

The soldiers, daring and with absolute contempt of death threw themselves into the deep and wet ditch and scaled the wall without meeting with any stubborn resistance. But when they reached the top of the wall, they were surprised and confounded to see before them a broad belt of water through which the Paraguayan artillery and infantry hurried away along submerged fords known only to them.

General Dias had issued the order that the Paraguayans, as soon as the enemy had possession of the ditch, should retreat to the fort, bringing their field pieces with them,

The allied troops were surprised. The officers were momentarily perplexed and nonplussed. They fancied that they had taken Curupaity and now saw the walls of the fort rise threateningly beyond a broad expanse of water in their front. Instead of having finished the task the sanguinary work was yet to begin.

Not a soldier ventured to descend into the water, and when the top of the wall was crowded with troops, the batteries of Curupaity opened upon them a fire of grape, cannister and shell, so disastrous and deadly that hundreds of them fell dead or wounded within a few seconds. Whoever did not leap back into the ditch paid with his life for his audacity.



General Osorios' famous Cavalry.

General Bartolomé Mitre, observing the battle from the walls of Fort Curuzú, after having received the report of the conditions in front, ordered a general assault on Curupaiti.

Breeches were at once made with spades in the wall and the ditch was filled with loose earth, so that the field-pieces could be advanced. They opened fire on Curupaiti, but were soon reduced to silence by the heavy guns of the fort.

The Brazilians and Argentines daringly waded through the lagune under a scorching fire from the enemy but their progress was stopped when they reached the formidable abatis.

The Paraguayans poured a murderous fire into the ranks of the enemy, causing a fearful carnage and thousands of them breathed their last before the abatis.

About sixty soldiers succeeded in crossing the abatis and the trenches and in scaling the wall, but were cut down to a man by the Paraguayans standing behind the traverse.

Towards two o'clock in the afternoon Mitre stopped the fruitless, sanguinary conflict and ordered his army to return to its camp at Curuzú. The retreat was accomplished in fairly good order.

The allies were in their camp at about five o'clock.

Their loss, on this day, was severe. Of the 18,000 warriors who at noon had advanced to the assault, 700 lay dead

or wounded in the morasses and bañados. The seventeen Argentine battalions, which had participated in the battle, had lost all their commanders. Colonels Rosetti and Charlone, Lieutenant-Colonels Fraga and Diaz and Major Salvadores. Colonels Rivas and Calveré, Lieutenant-Colonels Conesa, Martinez, Ayala, Gaspar, Campos, Luis Campos, and Geribona and Majors Lora, Retolazo, Fernandez and Mansilla were wounded.

The Paraguayans lost only 54 men, amongst them Lieutenants Lescano and Urdapilleta.

The 12th battalion of Paraguayan infantry was sent to the deserted battlefield to gather up the scattered arms and articles of accoutrement and to despatch the wounded into the better beyond. The unfortunate men were asked if they were still able to walk and were immediately killed if they answered in the negative. Nearly all those who were able to crawl managed to drag themselves to the camp of the allies; those remaining behind were shot.

The Argentine Lieutenant Quinteros escaped such a fate by a mere chance. When he answered that he was unable to walk and when he saw the Paraguayan load his gun, he dragged himself into a thicket but was subsequently taken prisoner and brought to Curupaiti.

Quinteros is one of the few prisoners who survived Paraguayan imprisonment as Lopez treated him with marked consideration. He explained later that he was the recipient of these favors on account of both being brother masons.

Eight other officers, besides Quinteros, were taken to the Paraguayan camp. Two of them were native Paraguayans who had enlisted in the allied army at Uruguyana.

General Diaz ordered the latter to be hanged at once.

One of the victims suffered excruciating torture because the noose had been badly adjusted. In the agony of death he begged the general to have him killed out-right as he was suffering unendurable anguish.

«That is exactly what I desire !» replied Diaz with demoniac laughter.

Death delivered the unfortunate man from his torture half an hour later.

The booty which the 12th battalion brought in from the battle-field was immense. The soldiers not only robbed the

dead, they even stripped them of their clothes, so that several Paraguayan battalions could be dressed in the uniforms of the allies. There were delivered 3,600 Minie rifles and a vast lot of drums, horns, knapsacks, ammunition etc., but not a flag.

Madame Lynch ordered her carriage as soon as the news of the victory reached Paso Pocu and drove over to Curupaiti, to congratulate the officers, to jest with the soldiers but principally to make advantageous bargains with them.

Elisa Lynch was a shrewd, practical woman who knew to drive a good bargain and never lost sight of any useful opportunity.

With the greatest amiability and the utmost disinterestedness, she was ready to exchange her Paraguayan paper currency, the only money in circulation in that country, for the gold which had been taken in large quantities by the soldiers from the fallen enemies. The business was very lively as the allied troops had received several months pay only five days before the battle. Madame spent several hours as a money changer and in the purchase of watches. Elisa was to-day, as always, the guardian angel of the brave soldiers and her praise was on the lips of all.

General Diaz, who had been in the saddle the whole day, did not wait for Madame to finish her lucrative business, but hastened, at dusk of evening, to report in person to the Marshal-President about the brilliant victory gained.

Lopez greeted him with joyous exclamations and an ardent embrace. Champagne was brought and, with the foaming juice of the grape, they celebrated the glorious victory over the «miserable macacos,» the same macacos to whom His Excellency magnanimously had offered terms of peace only a few days ago.

«So may all the wretches perish and may their bodies rot in the swamps!» exclaimed Lopez, intoxicated with wine and victory. Cheeks and brow were of a purplish hue and his black eyes sparkled like diamonds. After a brief pause, he added: «Proceed, my dear Diaz, continue your report.»

General Diaz then narrated how he had ordered the bands to furnish music to inspire the soldiers; described the surprise and dismay of the allies when they reached the top of the outer wall and saw that they had accomplished nothing and their real work was yet before them and how the well-aimed

cannons of the fort hurled discharge after discharge of grape and cannister into the dense crowds and tearing wide gaps through them.

«The effect of the artillery fire,» added Diaz with a contended smile,» was horrible. 7000 shots were fired on the land army and on the hostile fleet.«

That was the fatal day of Curupaity. The allies were so depressed that the activity of the army was paralyzed for a whole year.

General Mitre returned with his two Argentine divisions to Tuyuty, where General Polydoro, with his 30,000 men, had remained inactive on the 22nd although he had been ordered to attack the Paraguayan position at Paso Gomez.

Polydoro had been contented to check-mate the enemy by forming his troops in line of battle ready for the attack.

Not a gun was discharged on either side.

The infantry, formed into columns, stood with guns at rest.

The horses were hitched to the gun-carriages, ready to advance at any moment and the cavalry regiments, ready to mount, stood by their saddled horses.

No advance was made.

Four years later and after the close of the war, it was found that the conduct of Polydoro was justified by the circumstances. Lopez, fearing an attack that day on the Paso Gomez, had concentrated 48,000 soldiers with numerous cannons at that place. And the ground in front of Paso Gomez was even more unfavorable for an assault than that before Curupaity.

The excuse advanced by General Polydoro in defence of his behavior, that by arranging his army corps in order of battle, ready for the charge, he had, without losing a single man, secured the object of holding the enemy at Paso Gomez and of preventing the sending of reinforcements to Curupaity, may seem plausible but does not completely exculpate that officer.

He was certainly guilty of an act of insubordination.

He was recalled to Rio de Janeiro a few months after, to explain and justify his conduct. The venerable Fieldmarshal Marques de Gaxias succeeded him in the chief command of the Brazilian army.

The 22nd of September 1866 is a dark, gloomy page in the history of the allied army.

Cessation of Operations.

A long calm followed the day of Curupaity. The blow had been struck so unexpectedly and with such force that the allies required much time to recover from its effect. Their energy seemed totally paralyzed.

General Flores was greatly irritated that no opportunity had been offered him and his Orientals to participate in the battle of the 22nd. And when the other generals resisted his impetuous demands of a bold, reckless advance, the old caudillo, with two of his batallions, left the allied camp on the 30th of September, and embarked at Itapirú for Montevideo. To support the interest of the Banda Oriental in the triple alliance, he left 600 men and four cannon under the command of General Castro and these remained with the other allies until the termination of the war.

Fieldmarshal Marques de Caxia, recently appointed chief commander of the Brazilian forces arrived at Tuyuty on the 20th of November.

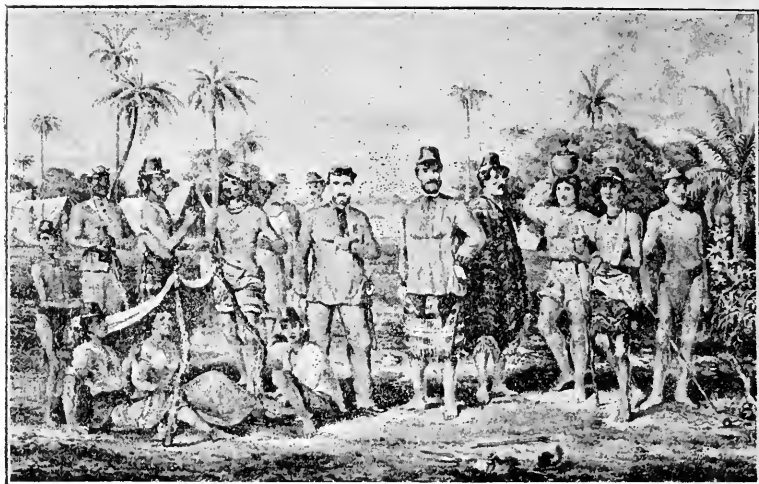
Admiral Ignacio, on the 21st of December, superseded the weak, irresolute Admiral Tamandaré as commander of the fleet.

Admiral Tamandaré and General Polydoro returned to Rio de Janeiro. They had to face an investigation of their conduct at the seat of war before an imperial court martial.

The cholera broke out in the allied camps in the month of February 1867. Many fell victims to the plague at Tuyuty but it raged with greatest malignity among the Brazilians camping at Curuzú. The epidemic attacked 4,000 men at this place of whom 2,400 privates and 87 officers died.

Curuzú was evacuated by the order of Caxias and the troops under the command of General Porto Alegre were transferred to Tuyuty in order to check the savages of the plague. The fleet, with its heavy guns, covered the evacuated fort and was able to prevent its reoccupation by the Paraguayan army.

General Osorio, who had recovered his health, brought a newly organized army corps of 10,000 men from the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul to the little town of Candelaria on the Rio Parana, whence he expected to join the main army under Field-Marshal Caxias.



Paraguayan Prisoners of War.

Reinforcements, besides this corps, continued to arrive from Brazil from October 1866 until July 1867 so that, at the latter date, the imperial army had attained a strength of 48000 men.

This army was divided by Caxias into three army corps of equal strength. The first was commanded by General Argollo, the second by General Porto Alegre and the third by General Osorio.

The relation existing between Field-Marshal Caxias and General Mitre, the commander-in-chief of the allied army was very friendly and hearty. Both men knew well how to observe and respect the somewhat vague and uncertain limits by which their authority was prescribed.

The chief commander was General Mitre, a brigadier general, and subordinate to him commanded Field-marshal Marquez de Caxias, a man, not only greatly outranking Mitre but also the latter superior in years and military experience. But

by the treaty of alliance the chief command had been entrusted to General Mitre and it could not be changed now. Mitre, however, always gave due heed to the counsel of the venerable marshal and openly and frankly acknowledged the superior skill and experience of Caxias. The latter was in reality the power behind the throne and Mitre simply carried out his ideas and suggestions.

This condition was also to terminate soon.

The western provinces of the Argentine Republic : Rioja, San Juan, Mendoza, San Luis etc. were in open rebellion, which threatened to assume serious and formidable proportions.

To suppress this revolution, General Paunero with 1000 men had been detached from the allied army and sent to the seat of the disturbance. This force proved insufficient.

It became necessary, not only to protect the constitution of the Argentine Republic, but also to prevent the organization of a hostile army in rear of the allies. Mitre, therefore, transferred the chief command to Field-marshal Marquez de Caxias and with 4,000 Argentine troops embarked for Rosario. Only 6,000 Argentine soldiers, under the command of General Gelly y Obes, remained in Paraguay. They were divided in two divisions and commanded by Generals Hornos and Emilio Mitre respectively.

These were the leading events which transpired in the camp of the allies between September 1866 and July 1867.

Mutual bombardments were frequent and skirmishes between pickets and outposts were of almost daily occurrence during that time, but this waste of ammunition, aside from killing some men, was without any influence on the course of the war.

There was a stirring life and great activity in the camp of the Paraguayans.

Lopez not only strengthened the fortifications already existing but connected them by a continuous intrenchment which extended from Curupaity via the northern and eastern border of the Laguna Lopez, the sauce (willow) grove, Paso Gomez, the northern rim of the Estero Rojas to Paso Yataity-Corà and thence via the Angulo, Paso Pocu and Paso Espinillo to the south-east corner of Fort Humaita, a distance of about 18 miles. Trenches were deepened, breastworks were raised

and repaired and covers for the protection of infantry from the projectiles of the hostile artillery were constructed behind the breastworks.

Lopez, under the very eyes of the enemy and with admirable skill and despatch had created a second formidable and large fortress in front of Humaitá.

The intrenchments, 18 miles in length, could only be manned by 23,000 men, and this only after the last conscription, by which every male inhabitant between eleven and sixty-five years of age, was forced into the ranks for the defence of the country.

The batteries and also the infantry battalions were placed at intervals far apart. The spaces between the batteries were filled with tree-trunks, wrapped in oxbides, resembling cannons. They served their purpose well and the officers of the reconnoitring parties took them for real guns.

A reserve corps, composed of the Lopez' guard of 1500 men, two infantry battalions and two regiments of cavalry, 2,000 strong, in all 3,500 soldiers with 40 field-pieces, was located at Paso Poci. It had to hold itself always in readiness to hasten to any menaced point on the long line of defences, where support was needed. All the most important points along the extended fortifications were connected with the headquarters at Paso Poci by lines of telegraph. Every event, even the most insignificant, had to be reported at once to the Supremo.

The road-ways along the walls and intrenchments were built in a substantial manner. Bomb-proof magazines were erected near each cannon.

The camp duties and services of the Paraguayans were severe and irksome. The different battalions were strictly separated and officers and men were forbidden any verbal or written communication with the officers and men of any other battalion or regiment. As a consequence, not one had the least information on the real state of the war. The army received no pay as it was considered the patriotic and sacred duty of every citizens to defend his country by the sacrifice, if necessary, of his life and his property. Money, in the form of a bounty, was disbursed to the army only three times during the five years duration of the contest.

The rations served consisted of meat, yerba,* tobacco and salt, the last only in small quantities.

The disciplin was exemplary and was maintained with the utmost severity. Every subaltern carried a cane. Each corporal was authorized to administer three blows, each sergeant twelve and each officer as many as he deemed fit, for any violation of duty. Flogging was general. An officer who was accused of having received, while on picket duty, a bribe of 30 pounds sterling, was shot. Three other officers, who had been guilty of irregularities in the distribution of rations among the men, suffered the same fate.

By the death of General Diaz, his favorite, which occurred at this time, Lopez suffered an irreparable loss.

When the Brazilian fleet was bombarding Fort Curupaity during the last days of January 1867, General Diaz with three officers entered a boat, rowed close up to the hostile vessels and cooly began to angle for fish.

This temerity was regarded by the Brazilians as a scoffing affront and they began to aim their guns at the little craft. A shell smashed the boat and shattered the generals leg, but, with the assistance of his companions he managed to swim ashore.

Lopez, as soon as the mishap was reported to him, sent Dr. Skinner, his own physician, who amputated the limb. Madame Lynch sent the wounded general in her own carriage to Paso Pocu, where he was lodged in the house of General Barrios and where the Marshal-President visited him several times during the day.

There was no hope of recovery. The victor of Curupaity, after suffering intense agonies, died a few days later.

Desertions now became of alarming frequency and in order to check them, Lopez gave public notice that wives, parents, brothers and sisters of the deserters would suffer the death penalty if the latter were not recaptured or did not return to their duty. Every soldier, furthermore, was held responsible for the conduct of his comrade. By this order, all the soldiers were converted into spies and informers who regarded each other with distrust and suspicion.

*)—Paraguay tea, out of which the favorite mate is made

The Marshal-President was well advised of everything which happened in the camp of the allies. Deserters from the hostile army, as soon as they reached his outposts, were stripped half-naked, their hands fettered behind their back and then taken before General Resquin who interrogated them. If the answer were «*no conviene*» (not satisfactory) the deserters were flogged until they were «*conviene*» ; whereupon the answers were written down and sent to the Marshal-President. The deserters were then locked up in the army prison, an open corral, where, sooner or later, they perished from exposure, privations and starvation.

Lopez never placed a great deal of confidence in these reports from deserters. He, therefore, organized a company of one hundred soldiers who were well acquainted with the surrounding country. They were relieved from the ordinary camp duties, received double rations, were armed only with the «*machete*»* and were required to report at Paso Pocú every evening at sundown, to receive their instructions and then to disperse in various directions. These nocturnal prowlers surprised and cut down pickets, bribed sentinels, sneaked into the very midst of the hostile camp under some kind of disguise and secured information from soldiers, sutlers, women and camp-followers. As a rule, they brought one prisoner along in confirmation of their statements, but the other surprised pickets had their throats cut as it was inconvenient to have too many prisoners in camp.

Two newspaper, «*El Centineta*,»** published twice a week, and «*Cabichui*,»*** a weekly paper published in the Guarani tongue, were issued by Lopez in the camp to heighten the patriotism and increase the fanaticism of the soldiers. The latter, a sort of comic or humoristic organ, was especially filled with incredible abuse of the allies. These papers were regularly distributed among the batallions and read to the soldiers.

A large number of women staid with the army in camp. They had a military organization under officers of their own sex and resided in villages or Apuas, set apart for them. They

*)—A large sickle shaped knife.

**)—The Sentinel.

***)—The Wasp.

were employed in weaving, washing and cleaning of the camp but were not permitted to remain with their friends over night.

Lopez insisted upon it that each batallion arranged a dance once a week. A sergeant of such a batallion made a requisition of General Resquin of the necessary number of women. They were ranged in a row and of the number the sergeant selected those who to him seemed the most suitable. Accompanied by the chosen ladies, a barrel of *caña* (a present from Lopez to increase the merriment,) and a fat steer for a roast, the sergeant proceeded to the place of the dance and the couples were soon «swinging the light fantastic toe» to the tune of the music.

The cholera made its appearance in the Paraguayan camp in May 1867. Its victims numbered about 50 a day. Separate hospitals, built of tree-trunks and rushes, were quickly erected for those stricken with the plague. As the stock of drugs and medicines was nearly exhausted, Masterman, the druggist, brewed and distilled medicaments and nostrums out of the medicinal plants, roots, fruits and herbs of the country and these medicines were then given to the patients by the Paraguayans whom Dr. Stuart had hurriedly converted into physicians.

When the epidemic spread, when Colonels Pereira and Gonzalez succumbed to it and Generals Resquin and Bruguez, Dr. Skinner, Benigno Lopez and others were attacked by it, the Marshal-President ordered that huge masses of branches and leaves of the laurel and araza be burned daily to disinfect the air. The thick, offensive smoke made breathing difficult.

Lopez was frightened to death. Potent as he deemed himself, he felt his impotence in the face of this fell disease. No one, not even his physician, was permitted to utter the word «cholera» in his presence. The name «chaico» was substituted for it. In spite of all precautions and probably by reason of his cowardly fear, Lopez was taken with the «chaico», was confined to his bed for several days and charged every one with the intention to poison him.

Field-Marshal Caxias, at the end of April, resolved to utilize a balloon in reconnoitering the enemy's position. A Frenchman, the owner of a balloon, was employed for the

undertaking, but the first attempt miscarried, as the balloon caught fire and burned.

A North American and officer of the Brazilian general staff undertook the first ascent, when six weeks later two other balloons arrived from Rio de Janeiro. Soldiers held the balloon captive by a rope 600 feet long and pulled it from one end of the entrenchment to the other.

The Paraguayans were in consternation at the sight of the balloon and when it disappeared from view behind a cloud they believed that it was able to render itself visible and invisible at will. When they saw that the balloon could not bombard their camp from above, they commenced to fire at it, but without hitting it. The balloon made successive ascents during the next few days, and as the Paraguayans could not injure it by shooting, they contrived to envelop the camp in a dense smoke by burning vast masses of wet grass. Notwithstanding this, the observers in the balloon managed to reconnoitre the Paraguayan position as far as Paso Pocú and to count the number of guns mounted on the front intrenchments. They counted 106 cannons and 3 mortars.



The Surprise.

The condition of the Paraguayans was soon to grow worse and the long activity of their enemies, which gave them ample time to complete their continuous line of fortifications, was a very fortunate circumstance to them.

Their adversaries now appeared on their left flank.

Field-Marshal Caxias had executed a plan, conceived and well matured for some time previously.

On the morning of July 23rd 1867, he, with 38,000 men, broke camp and marched from Tuyuty eastward along a low narrow ridge of solid land between the Esteros Rojas by the Paso Tio Domingo, which extends between the Estero and the

swamps of the Laguna Cespedes, marched in a north-westerly direction until he reached Tuyu-Cué on the 29th of July and began to fortify his camp.

The second Brazilian army corps and 1000 Argentines, in all 16,000 men, under the command of General Porto Alegre, remained at Tuyuty, to keep open the line of communication with the harbor at Itapirú, which was the allies' base of supplies.

Admiral Ignacio, with ten ironclads passed the threatening batteries of Curupaity on the 15th day of August. Five of these vessels were anchored between Curupaity and Humaitá, and the other five went farther up stream and were moored behind a little island, almost opposite to Humaitá but beyond the range of its batteries.

Lopez was not embarrassed by the apparent successes of the enemy.

He caused most of the heavy guns of Curupaity to be brought to Humaitá as they had now become superfluous at the former place. Colonel Alén, until now commander of Curupaity, was put in charge of Humaitá and the command of Curupaity was entrusted to Captain Gil.

The fleet of ironclads opened a spirited bombardment on Humaitá, without doing any perceptible damage to the wide-spreading fortress, which contained a garrison of only 2,000 men and scarcely two dozen buildings. No citizens, whatever, resided in Humaitá.

The unfavorable situation of the Paraguayans was to grow worse yet.

The Brazilian General Menna Barreto, a bold, resolute soldier, was sent out on October 27th with 3,000 men, with the object to capture the little town of Tayi on the Rfo Paraguay, about 25 kilometers to the north of the enciente of Humaitá and to blockade the river at that place.

The territory intervening between Humaitá and Tayi consists of a wilderness of swamps, marshes, woods and low meadows sprinkled with thickets. Lopez had opened two roads through this wilderness, which intersected each other and were defended by intrenchments at the terminal points. This territory, known under the name of Potrero Ovello, was used

as a stock reserve where the cattle, needed for the support of the army were kept and pastured.

Menna Barreto took this potrero on the 30th of October after a stubborn fight and captured Tayi on November 1st.

The Paraguayans lost 500 dead and 68 severely wounded who fell into the hands of the Brazilians. The fury and bitterness with which the Paraguayans fought was such, that none of the wounded accepted the proffered pardon, as long as they were able to participate in the battle.

Lopez lost here also two of his warships, the «Olimpo» which was sunk by the Brazilian artillery and the «Veinticinco de Mayo» which caught fire and burned down to the water's edge.

General Menna Barreto at once constructed intrenchments around Tayi and had them mounted with fourteen 32-pounder Whitworth guns. He also stretched a heavy chain, which rested on pontoon-boats, across the river to prevent the shipments of supplies from the north of Humaitá.

It seemed as if now the Paraguayan army and Humaitá were cut off from the rest of the world.

General Menna Barreto, with a force of 5,000 men stood in the north. A Brazilian division of 6,000 men, under the command of General Neves, camped at the Estancia San Solano to the north-east. Field-Marshal Caxias, with the main army of 25,000 soldiers, occupied Tuyu-Cué in the east. General Porta Alegre, with 16,000 men, remained at Tuyuty to the south. A gunboat-fleet of 18 steamers, armed with 75 guns and manned by 2,000 men, was moored at Curuzú to the south west. Five ironclads with 31 guns, anchored almost opposite to Humaitá, guarded the western and north-western front and almost closed the iron ring around the fortress.

The allies imagined that they had completely invested and isolated Humaitá! This, leaving out of consideration the mystic and mysterious Gran Chaco, was apparently so. The Gran Chaco, helped to frustrate their scheme.

The Gran Chaco, a veritable «*noli me tangere*» of the allies, is a wilderness of impenetrable woods and impassable swamps and marshes, a region unfit for the operations of armies.

The Gran Chaco, for these very reasons, was of particular importance to Lopez and he delayed not to improve the advantages it offered to him.

First he erected a strong fort on the Gran Chaco bank of the river, 6 kilometers above Humaitá and between this place and Tayi. It was armed with 30 guns and placed under the command of General Caballero. It was named Timbó.

Then, with almost superhuman efforts, he had opened a road, 20 miles in length, through the forest and swamps of the Gran Chaco. This road connected Fort Timbó with Montelindo, situated two leagues above the place where, on the opposite bank, the Rio Tebicuary empties into the Rio Paraguay.

Droves of oxen coming from the interior of Paraguay to Montelindo, were driven from this place over the new road through the Gran Chaco to Fort Timbó and then by flat boats, barges and rafts transferred to Humaitá. A new way had been found to provision the army again.

In this emergency, when misfortune after misfortune assailed him, Lopez gave proof of his extraordinary resolution and firmness of character.

His situation had become truly menacing and desperate, but his dispositions betrayed no nervous restlessness nor hopelessness and his military talent, notwithstanding his personal cowardice, shone with unusual brilliancy.

The clear insight, to master complicated situations, never failed him, as long as he was beyond the range of hostile guns. His residence at Paso Pocu was protected by a high earth-wall, 36 feet in thickness and covered by a bomb-proof roof.

As an evidence of the resolute and determined character of the Marshal-President it may be stated that, immediately after the capture of the Potrero Ovello, the loss of Tayi and the two warships at the latter place, he proceeded to take the offensive.

He perceived clearly the probability of defeating the hostile forces in detail after the allied army had been divided and spread over an extensive territory. If he could succeed in forcing General Porto Alegre from his position at Tuyutí and driving him into the Rio Parana, then the allies would be cut off from their base of supplies and would be compelled to

make a desperate assault on his entrenchments or submit to an unconditional surrender.

It was the 2nd day of November 1867. Night wrapped swamp, lagune, woods and plain in the folds of her sombre garments and a warm rain poured down upon the southern regions of Paraguay where for a year and a half the sanguinary conflict had raged.

The bugler of the guard in front of headquarters at Paso Pocu had given the signal for roll-call and the sounds were echoed from batallion to batallion through the camp.

An unusually large number of Generals and staff-officers were at that hour assembled before the residence of the Marshal-President and silently awaited the orders of the Supremo. No one ventured to engage in a conversation with his comrades. That would have been suspicious and consequently dangerous.

The entrance doors were soon flung open. The generals and staff officers entered the poorly lighted front hall and from thence stepped into the equally dimly illuminated, large, plainly furnished office of the Supremo who walked to and fro with long strides.

There were present: Generals Resquin, Barries, Bruguez and Caballero, the Colonels Ximenez, Gonzalez, Rivarola and Marcos, Lieutenant Colonel Lescano and the Majors Mendoza, Fernandez, Bullo, Duarte, Montiel and Palacios.

Lopez, for one moment, fixed his dark, piercing eyes on his officers. His countenance was pale but not the quiver of a muscle betrayed the uneasiness which, but a little while ago had controlled him.

With a calm, cold voice he began:

«Gentlemen: For the first time* you are now called together to receive instructions in regard to the attack which will be made to-morrow, so that each one of you may know how to conduct himself in regard to the operations of his comrades.

*—Lopez commonly only gave each commander his particular instruction as to his part in the battle planned, so that no one but himself had a view of the whole field. On this occasion he made an exception to the rule.

An attack on the enemy's camp at Tuyuty will be made to-morrow morning at day break and before sunrise, and you, General Barrios, are selected to lead the troops.

All the troops, that could possibly be spared from the defence of the intrenchments, have been collected and thus a corps of 8,000 men has been formed for the purpose, which I hereby place under your order. The infantry, divided into two brigades, will be commanded by Colonels Ximenez and Gonzalez and the cavalry will be led by General Caballero.

The charge will be made from the east and not from the north, so that the enemy will be taken in the flank. Only the infantry will be used for this attack. The cavalry will sweep around the camp, press forward as far as Itapirú and cut down everything in its way. Arrived there, they will wheel about and charge on the enemy's rear.

All the troops designated for the attack, will go across the Paso Yataity-Corá to-night and camp there so that they will be ready for the surprise before the dawn of day.

All the buildings, barracks and ranchos in the hostile camp will be burned. It is your duty, moreover, to loot the camp completely, to destroy the stores which you cannot carry away and to let the soldiers secure all the booty they can.

Here is a list of the different organizations of troops placed under your command and now proceed to carry out the arrangements.»

«Gentlemen !» continued Lopez, bowing lightly in addressing the other officers, «I expect, that every one of you will do his duty.»

All bowed and departed in silence.

The Paraguayans, massed at Paso Yataity-Corá, were on the alert at dawn of day and in a double quick, charged westward towards Tuyuty, while the cavalry, making a wide sweep around the enemy's camp dashed off in the direction of Itapirú.

The infantry encountered two Argentine picket guards, who opened fire on them, but they were left unmolested, so as not to give the alarm too early. The success of the enterprise depended on the completeness of the surprise.

The outer entrenchments were scaled with lightning speed and the soldiers behind them were cut down before they had time to discharge more than two guns.

Forward stormed the Paraguayans, leaving behind them some detachments, previously appointed for the purpose, to set fire to the barracks and ranchos. A sea of flame soon raged in the camp and clouds of sparks and fire ascended the sky.

The garrison of the second line of intrenchments, composed of four batallions, gave way before the sudden, impetuous onslaught of the Paraguayans and fled toward Itapirú.

This second line was also taken with ease and the Paraguayans, still rushing onward, encountered the mercado,* peopled by about 2,000 sutlers, who, crazed with fright, followed the flying Brazilians.

The Paraguayans now began to loot and plunder the mercado to their hearts content. They commenced to feast on the provisions, to drink the liquor they found in abundance and to load themselves with the spoils. Some of them even, burdened with the fruits of the pillage started on the return to Paso Poci. The mercado, after being plundered, was set on fire.

Suddenly the crash and thunder of artillery, and a hail-storm of grape, cannister and chrapnell, dealing death and destruction on all sides, swept among the numerous groups of feasting and dancing Paraguayans.

It was now broad day light and the Paraguayans, to their dismay, discovered before them a redoubt, armed with 14 guns. This fort did not give any evidence of its existence until General Porto Alegre had gathered sufficient troops to man its walls.

Barrios, to his unpleasant surprise saw, that the main object of the undertaking was still to be attained. In the prevailing dusk, neither he nor his officers, had noticed these formidable works.

The Paraguayan officers at once proceeded to rally their men and to form them into columns. It was a difficult task, as many were already intoxicated and only disorderly mobs could be led to the assault. Heroically they charged with bayonets fixed, up to the trenches and walls of the redoubt. It was all in vain. Artillery fire and volleys of musketry brushed them away.

*—The Sutlers' camp.

General Barrios recognized the futility of a longer continued assault and ordered the retreat.

Scarcely had the retreat commenced, when the allies sallied from the redoubt and a fearful carnage ensued among the intoxicated, booty-laden backward pressing Paraguayans.

General Caballero with his cavalry, meantime, pushed rapidly southward, crossed the Estero Bellaco by the Paso de la Carretas, dashed forward as far as the Paso de la Patria near Itapirú, then turned, cut down what came in his way of fugitive Brazilians and sutlers and, recrossing the Estero Bellaco by the westerly Paso Sidre, returned to Tuyutí, to charge the enemy in the rear. It was too late. The infantry had already ceased its assaults on the redoubt and was in full retreat to Paso Pocú.

A cavalry brigade under the command of the Argentine General Hornos arrived at this moment from Tuyu-Cué where the roar of the cannon had been heard and the conflagration had been seen. It dashed at once into the Paraguayan cavalry and a spirited fight ensued. It was useless, as the prevailing circumstances of the battle forced Caballero to retreat.

The battle was at an end at nine o'clock in the morning.

An after-piece was yet to be played that day after the events, already narrated, had occurred.



The Loma Valentina (Cumbarity).

Among the cannons captured by the Paraguayans, was a 32-pounder Whitworth gun, which, on being transported, had sunk axle-deep into the swamp within gun-shot distance of the allies' intrenchments, and had to be abandoned.

Lopez was furious at the thought such a valuable gun should be lost immediately after having been captured.

General Bruguez stepped up to the enraged Supremo and pledged his honor that he would bring out the gun if two battalions were given him in aid.

Lopez accepted the proposition with delight.

It was not an easy task for Bruguez to organize and form two serviceable battalions out of the disorganized, intoxicated mob of returning Paraguayans. At last he succeeded.

The general, besides those men, took with him 12 draught oxen, ropes, planks, spades, windlasses and other articles necessary for the work. He also took along two prisoners of war of the Paraguayan legion to have them shot per order of Lopez. They had already been half flogged to death before they were turned over to Bruguez.

They were ordered to kneel, as soon as the general was outside the intrenchments, and were then shot from behind, as was the custom with all traitors and spies in the South American republics.

Allied troops surrounded the guns and were endeavouring to draw it out of the swamps with a team of cattle.

A lively skirmish ensued ending in a victory of the Paraguayans and the much prized gun was brought off to the evident delight of the Supremo.

The Paraguayans lost that day 1,200 dead and 1,000 wounded. Of staff-officers there were killed Lieutenant Colonels Lescano and Majors Fernandez, Mendoza and Bullo. Colonel Gonzalez, Gimenez and Rivarola and Majors Duarte and Montiel wounded. The allies lost 400 dead, 700 wounded, 600 prisoners, 3 flags and 14 cannons.

General Barrios, who commanded the battle, was promoted to general of division, but he did not dare to wear the uniform of his new rank, as the Marshal-President himself only wore the uniform of a general of division.

The whole camp presented the picturesque look of a European country fair. This was the case especially at the places

where the wounded were attended to. They, in spite of their wounds, had managed to bring their loads of booty with them. Every Paraguayan is a natural, passionate trader and the exchange in all articles imaginable was extremely lively.

What things had they not dragged with them from the hostile camp. Articles, of the use of which, these simple people, had not the faintest conception. For instance, the perfumery, enclosed in dainty flasks, they regarded as rare and choice liquors and drank them with the greatest enjoyment pictured on their faces. The brave Guaranis relished many things that day of which they had never dreamt in their lives before.

Shrewd, thrifty Madame Lynch also drove a brisk trade. With the same amicability, which she had shown the previous year at Curupaity, was she again ready to exchange her paper currency for the gold which the soldiers had captured in the allied camp. She knew her business.

The captured prisoners of war, officers and privates, were put into a roofless, shelterless, miry corral, where they succumbed, one after another, to cold, hunger disease and privations.

A Brazilian captain, to end the torture, resolved to escape at all hazards. He succeeded in slipping out of the pen and in reaching a near by grove, but soon became convinced of the impossibility of passing through the Paraguayan lines.

He was discovered three days later and shot in front of his fellow-prisoners. To prevent any further attempts to escape 50 others were selected at random from the prisoners and the doomed men shot immediately.

«It is simply to deter you from such ventures» explained General Resquin, with an icy smile, to the remaining prisoners.

The surprise was well planned by Lopez and it would have been a splendid success, as, without the premature pillage of the mercado the Paraguayans would have taken the extensive reduct at the first assault.

If that had taken place, then the situation would have changed at once. The besiegers would have turned into besieged and their condition would have been the most critical.

The “Alagoas.”

The Brazilian fleet, moored below Humaitá, was reinforced by four new men-of-war, sent from Rio de Janeiro and built after the pattern of the monitors. On the 13th day of February 1868, under the command of Commodore Delphin Carlos de Carvalho they passed the batteries of Fort Curupaity. They lay low in the water and very little of their hulls was exposed to the projectiles of the hostile guns. Their names were : «Pará,» «Alagoas,» «Rio Grande,» and «Pianhy.» They were propelled each by machines of 30 horse power and each carried a 70-pounder Whitworth gun.

The ease with which these ironclad monitors passed the batteries depressed the spirits of the Paraguayans.

Lopez only was undismayed. He conjectured rightly that this fleet of ironclads would now make an attempt to force the passage of the river at Humaitá and to reach Asuncion, the capital, a city which at that time contained about 40,000 inhabitants. To render the manœuver harmless and unimportant even if successfully carried out, he telegraphed to the vice-President of the republic to have every man, capable of bearing arms, leave the capital within 24 hours. At the same time he sent Elisa Lynch to Asuncion with the commission to place in safety all articles of value in his and her residence, so that they should not be lost in the confusion incident to the hasty evacuation of the capital.

The courageous woman left Paso Pocú on February 18th and travelling through the Gran Chaco by the way of Montelinda reached Asuncion three days after and had already accomplished the object of her journey, when the vice-President published the decree of the Marshal-President and proceeded at once to its rigorous enforcement.

— — It was past midnight, Silence reigned on the Rio Paraguay and only the faint rustling of the foliage in the tops of the forest-giants on the banks of the river, as they were moved by the gentle night wind, were audible. Dark clouds veiled the starry firmament of a mild, peace-breathing summer night, in which everything seemed to enjoy sweet repose and refreshing sleep.

Silently something pushes away from the Brazilian iron-clads.

Three boats with muffled oars glided from the flag-ship «Brazil» to the «Barroso,» «Bahia» and «Tamandaré.». The commanders of the latter returned to their ships from the flag-ship where they had received the last instructions for the advance to be undertaken within an hour. Admiral Ignacio, recently created Baron de Inhauma by the Emperor, had resolved to force the passage of the river at Humaitá, this night, the night of the 19th of February 1868. The time was favorable as the river was high and the torpedoes were covered with deep water so that the vessels could pass over them without injury from those submarine monsters. The heavy chain, resting on pontoons, which had blockaded the river had also disappeared. The fire from the ironclads had demolished the pontoons causing the chain to sink to the bottom and to bury itself deep in the mud. The Paraguayans made vain attempts to raise the chain, which had 7 inches in thickness, by pushing rafts beneath it. The raking fire from the Brazilian vessels, kept up day and night, compelled them to desist.

The 14 ironclads put themselves in motion about half past two o'clock in the morning. It was intended that only three ironclads and three monitors under Comodore Delphin should force the passage. The remaining eight vessels were only to assist and protect the former by engaging the fire of the hostile batteries.

The latter cast anchor ten minutes after the start and the other six advanced to run the gauntlet of the batteries.

Each of the three ironclads had a monitor in tow. The admiral conjectured rightly that the latter, due to the weakness of their machines, would be unable to overcome the very rapid current of the river at the narrows.

The «Barroso» with the monitor «Rio Grande» led the van. It was followed by the «Bahia,» the flagship of Comodore Del-

phim, with the «Alagoas,» and «Tamandaré» with the monitor «Para» brought up the rear.

The batteries of the fortress opened fire on the fleet at forty minutes past two a.m. Rockets shot up from both banks to alarm the men in the shore batteries. Fire balls ascended continuously, illuminating river and shore so that every object on water and land was distinctly visible.

The «Barroso» and its companion the monitor «Rio Grande» advanced steadily notwithstanding the severe fire from the shore batteries and, after a run of 40 minutes, passed the last battery and sent up a rocket as a signal that they had safely made the passage.

The «Bahia» and the «Alagoas» followed. Their progress was very slow on account of the swift current and the clumsiness of the steering gear of the «Bahia.» A ball from the battery «Londres» cut the cable, the «Alagoas» became detached from the «Bahia» and drifted backward with the rapid current.

Admiral Ignacio, seeing the critical situation of the «Alagoas» signalled her to return to the main fleet and to anchor there.

The machinery of the «Alagoas» was disabled at that moment and the helpless vessel slowly drifted down the stream, but her brave commander Captain Lieutenant Joaquin Maurity was unperturbed.

The «Tamandaré» and the «Para» steamed past, the commanders supposing, naturally, that the «Alagoas» would obey the orders of the admiral.

The situation of the little monitor grew more desperate from moment to moment as the fire from the fortress was now concentrated almost exclusively on the little craft. The admiral repeated the order to return but the «Alagoas» made no efforts to comply with the command.

The damage to the machinery had, meantime, been repaired by Commander Maurity with the assistance of Etchburne, a native Frenchman, his chief engineer, and the Captain, perceiving that he had his ship under his control, sent her up stream after the other ships, although raked by a galling fire from the heavy guns of the fortress.

It was an ever memorable deed.

The smallest ironclad of the Brazilian navy, with a machine of only 30 horse power, with a crew of only 32 men and armed with only one 70 pound cannon undertook to battle with the strongest fortress in South America and defied the fire of the shore batteries with their 93 guns of heavy calibre.

The little tortoise, paddling slowly onward against the swift current at the narrows, was struck 187 times by hostile projectiles. The armor was indented, ripped and torn, but the ship itself sustained no serious damage.

A violent shiver ran through the whole vessel every time it was struck by a heavy projectile.

The fire from the fortress was well sustained and the guns were well aimed. The tremendous shower of shot and shell poured on the little monitor, could not stop its stubborn and determined advance. It accomplished a feat, which, Admiral Tamandaré had declared, could only be undertaken by a fleet of sixteen vessels, calculating that eight or ten ships would be lost during the passage.

A resolute, determined and courageous lieutenant, with his diminutive craft, accomplished what they had not dared to undertake with their whole fleet. It was a great achievement.

The «Alagoas» after running the gauntlet of the hostile batteries for an hour, left the fortress behind, entered the still waters above away from the rapid current of the main stream and signalled that the first given command had been executed.

But there was yet another danger in store for the plucky little monitor!

The vessel, after having arrived at a place of safety, was compelled to hunt up the other ships which had preceded it and to steer through unknown waters.

Numerous Paraguayan boats, filled with soldiers, suddenly emerged from the many deep, contiguous canals and bayons of the low banks of the Potrero Orello. They came with the intent of grappling, boarding and overpowering the monitor.

The diminutive size of the vessel the clear deck and the fact that by closing the hatchways access from the deck to the interior could be completely barred, were of great advantage against this unexpected attack.

It was now broad daylight.

The Paraguayans, pressing furiously ahead, succeeded in boarding the monitor, but were perplexed and confounded when they saw none of the crew. The crew was in the hold and in the tower and the hatchways were securely closed by heavy iron plates.

Then the crew poured a withering fire from within the tower into the dense masses of Paraguayans surging over the deck, which was cleared in a brief time.

Of those who managed to leap back into the boats some were killed by the fire from the tower and the others perished in the waves, when the monitor, in hot pursuit, crushed and sank the boats.

The little steamer, turning now to the right and then to the left, ran down one after another of the wildly flying canoes. Only a few of them succeeded in reaching the sheltering canals where the monitor could not pursue them.

The fight was over in five minutes.

The «Alagoas» joined the other ships at five o'clock in the morning. The fleet then steamed up stream, passed the batteries of Fort Timbó on the Gran Chaco bank and an hour later cast anchor at Tayi.

The total loss of the six ironclads amounted to only 10 wounded but the «Tamandaré,» «Para» and Alagoas» had suffered such damages that it required several weeks to repair them and make them fit for service again. The damage sustained consisted chiefly in crushing, breaking, bending and loosening of the armor-plates.

It was a serious blunder of Comodore Delphim, in this daring and successful enterprise, that he took all his ironclads past Fort Timbó to Tayi instead of leaving two of them in the river between Timbó and Humaitá.

If he had done this, then the Paraguayans, already suffering from starvation, would have been cut off completely from the interior, and the war must have come to an end in a few days.

On the following day, the 20th of February. Comodore Delphim, with the «Bahia,» «Borroso» and «Rio Grande,» ascended the river to Asuncion, where he cast anchor on the 24th. He had no knowledge of the evacuation of the city by the Paraguayans.

He threw 68 shells into the city during a bombardment of two hours and when he observed no signs whatever, either of surrender or of attempts to pass, he returned with his three ships to Tayi. He could not risk a landing with a crew of only 295 men on his whole fleet. Nor was it his desire to burn the capital and thus to deprive the allies of the fruit of their victory,

The Emperor Pedro II, in recognition of the distinguished services rendered in the passage of the river at Humaitá, made Commodore Delphin Carlos de Carvalho a Baron de Passagem and Captain-Lieutenant Joaquim Maury, besides his promotion to the rank of Captain of Corvette, was decorated with cross of a commander of the order of roses.



The Bogabantes*).

The fall of Humaitá was only a question of time after the six Brazilian ironclads had succeeded in forcing the passage of the river and now controlled the upper river.

The Marshal-President was not discouraged. On the contrary, he developed an indomitable energy, truly wonderful, in these days full of disaster. He conceived a new enterprise against his enemies and proceeded at once to carry it into effect.

The war would yet take a new turn if the Supremo could succeed in capturing one or two of the enemy's armored ships. These, manned with brave Paraguayans, would be able to bid defiance to the whole allied fleet.

Lopez, animated with this idea, selected 300 of the strongest and most determined men of his army and out of them formed a corps of bogabantes, the training and commanding of

*—Rowers.

which was entrusted to Captain Cespedes of the navy. This officer, with the aid of two young officers commanded to his assistance, drilled the men daily in rowing, swimming, grappling, boarding and gymnastics generally and instructed them in the art of an attack on a men-of-war. The bogabantes received neither muskets nor cannon. They were armed only with sabres, pistols, handgrenades and rockets.

The Rio Paraguay, at the time of its periodic floods, which raise the lower river twelve, and the middle and upper river thirty feet, is covered with a greater or less number of floating islands, called camelotes. They are formed of trees, bushes, reeds, rushes and heaps of earth tumbling into the river from the undermined and caving banks. They are frequently large enough to furnish involuntary refuge to the savage beasts of the forest.

They are often a great inconvenience and even a menace to navigation if they float along in clusters.

The night of the 1st and 2nd of March was intensely dark. Not a star was visible on the firmament.

The two armored ships «Cabral» and «Lima Barros» which formed the head of the Brazilian squadron moored below Humaitá had placed guard-boats about a hundred feet, up stream, from their bows, in order to give a quick alarm in case of approaching danger.

It was about two o'clock in the morning, when Jose da Silva, a marine in the guard-boat of the «Lima Barros,» noticed an unusually large number of camelotes drifting down stream. The close clustering of the little islets attracted his attention and he proceeded to investigate the matter. Almost at the same moment he discovered the noiseless movements of oars beneath the green boughs, and, suspecting a new Paraguayan devilry, gave the alarm and rushed back with his boat to the «Lima Barros.»

The Paraguayans now threw off their mask of green branches and climbed on board simultaneously with the marine.

The surprise was carried out with 24 boats, Captain Cespedes had them connected, two and two, by ropes 60 feet in length. In floating down the stream, the boats were so steered, that the centre of the connecting ropes struck the bows of

the «Lima Barros» and the «Cabral.» The boats then drifted alongside the vessels and were held there by the ropes,

The well-planned scheme of boarding the vessels was entirely successful so far.

The decks of the two ironclads were instantly filled with bogabantes and the guards cut down.

Commodore Joaquim Rodriguez da Costa, the commander of the squadron, at that time, rested, half dressed, on his bed in the cabin of the «Lima Barros.» Aroused by the noise on deck, he jumped from his couch, grasped his sword and rushed on deck, where, attacked from all sides, he fought furiously for his life but was overpowered and sank under the sabre strokes of the enraged Paraguayans. His body was afterwards found in a horrible mutilated condition.

The commander of the same vessel Captain Aurelio Garçindo Fernando da Sá was also severely wounded before he could take refuge in the sheltering tower.

The hatchways leading to the holds of the ships were now closed and stopped further progress of the brilliant enterprise.

The leaf turned.

Protected by the iron armor of the towers, the Brazilians began to pour a withering fire into the mob of Paraguayans rushing around the deck. These, exposed to the fire and seeing certain death before them, made desperate efforts to penetrate into the holds.

They threw rockets and handgrenades down the smoke stacks. All in vain! They caused some damage and wounded some of the crew, but could effect nothing more.

The «Silvado» having steam up, now approached from below. The commander, Captain-Lieutenant Jeronima Golcalvez, perceiving the critical situation of the two ironclads, in spite of the darkness, steered his ship straight between the «Lima Barros» and the «Cabral» and poured a raking fire of grape and cannister among the Paraguayans swarming the decks of the two vessels.

The moon had now risen and with a soft, mellow light illuminated a fearful scene of horrid slaughter.

Corpses and mutilated bodies covered the decks and streams of blood poured into the river to mingle with the waves.

Those of the ¶Paraguayans who attempted to save themselves by swimming ashore were pursued by the boats of the Brazilians. They accepted no pardon but preferred death to surrender. Heaping curses and imprecations upon their enemies and cheering enthusiastically for the Marshal-President they received the bullets and sank beneath the waves.

Truly, the intrepidity, determination and devotion of this corps of bogabantes, so lately organized and now exterminated, merit the highest praise.

Their losses were as follows :

On the decks of the «Lima Barros» and the «Cabral» lay 110 dead and 15 severely wounded Paraguayans and among the latter Captain Cespedes, the intrepid leader of the devoted band. The Brazilian boats, in pursuit of those endeavoring to swim ashore killed 104, and only about 50, mostly wounded, and favored by the darkness, managed to reach Humaitá

The Brazilian losses amounted to 8 dead and among them Commodore da Costa. Four officers and 17 men were wounded severely and 2 officers and 50 men were wounded lightly.

The scheme of the Paraguayans was well conceived and executed and, unquestionably, would have been crowned with great success, if, unfortunately for them, the «Silvado» had not had steam up at that time. The quick action of Captain-Lieutenant Jeronimo Goncalvez decided the fight and saved the Brazilian navy two of its best ironclads.



The Laguna Acayunasa.

On one of the last evenings of the month of June 1868 a tall, serious, lonely man sat in the office of the headquarters at Humaitá and stared sorrowfully into the flame of the tallow candle before him.

He was dressed in the uniform of a colonel and his head rested heavily on his right elbow. The cold rain of winter

beat against the closed window-shutters. The stillness of death prevailing in the room was only broken once or twice by the faint sight of the officer, whose soul was filled with anguish.

Truly, this officer, Colonel Alén, commander of Humaitá, had good reasons to feel sorry and depressed.

Lopez, with his Generals Barrios, Resquin and Bruguez had left the fortress on the 3rd of March and had evacuated one after another, the entire position formerly occupied by him, in order to establish a new camp at San Fernando on the Rio Tebicuary and to recruit his army. 12,000 men with 150 guns were despatched from Humaitá to this new camp within four weeks, and 8,000 new recruits, old men and children above 10 years of age, all that was left of the male population, were added to the army.

Humaitá with 215 guns and a garrison of 3,500 men was placed under the command of Colonel Alén. Fort Timbó, six kilometers above Humaitá, on the Gran Chaco side of the river, was armed with 30 guns, garrisoned by 3,000 men and commanded by General Caballero.

The Fortress Humaitá was able to sustain a long siege as long as the river was open to Fort Timbó and as long as it could be amply provisioned from that side.

The allies had closely invested Humaitá since the 23rd of March. They became more and more convinced, as time passed on, that a line of communication, by which supplies were brought to the fortress, must still be open through the Gran Chaco. The Argentine General Rivas was therefore sent with 4,000 men across the river to find this line of communication among the lagunes and timbered swamps of the Gran Chaco.

He had solved the problem on the 3rd of May. The road over which supplies were brought to Humaitá, ran along a narrow ridge, 300 metres in width, which bordered the river for a distance of six kilometers. On one side of this low ridge ran the Rio Paraguay and on the other, the western side, spread the extensive Laguna Acayunasa.

Rivas established himself on this ridge half way between Fort Timbó and Humaitá, and fortified his camp. General Caballero endeavored to dislodge him the next day and again on the 8th of May but was compelled to abstain from further at-

tempts. After suffering severe losses, he was forced to return to Fort Timbó without having accomplished anything.

Humaitá was now completely isolated and doomed to fall unless General Rivas could be forced from his position.

Rivas, meantime, had discovered a canal which connected the Laguna Acayunasa with the Rio Paraguay and by which the allied boats could amply supply his division with artillery, ammunition, provisions, and reinforcements.

All this did not fail to have a depressing effect on the Paraguayans. Lopez sent proposition after proposition to General Caballero. They were all of them impracticable. The river and the lagoon forbade a flank movement and Caballero was not strong enough to venture an attack in front on the narrow ridge.

The Paraguayans tried once more to capture a Brazilian ironclad. They endeavored to board the «Rio Grande» at Tayi, at which occasion the commander, Captain-Lieutenant Antonio Joaquim fell, but failed. The Brazilian ironclads «Cabral» and «Silvado» and the monitor Pianhy passed the batteries of Humaitá the next day and dropped anchor above the fortress.

The last hope to save Humaitá had now vanished and its fall was inevitable.

All this was clear to the pale, lonely man sitting in the office, whom Lopez had entrusted with the command of the fortress. He was a brave and circumspect soldier, who had always done his full duty and who had ever kept his honor pure and untarnished. He knew also what he could expect from the Supremo if he had to yield at last and surrender the fortress.

However much Colonel Alén might revolve the matter in his mind, he could not discover a way of escape.

A fit of absolute despair took possession of him suddenly—his senses became paralyzed—mechanically he reached for the revolver on the table before him—a crash and the unfortunate commander rolled in his own blood on the floor.

He had not succeeded in killing himself but he was so severely wounded, that Colonel Martinez, the second in command took charge of the fortress.

This officer also recognized the impossibility of resisting the enemy and to obtain help from without. After a consul-

tation with Captains Cabral and Gil, he concluded to make the greatest effort possible to escape with the garrison through the Gran Chaco to the Supremo at San Fernando. It was necessary to make quite ample preparations for the enterprise without undue haste and with the greatest circumspection.

The Paraguayans had constructed entrenchments opposite the chain-battery of Humaitá, on the right bank of the Rio Paraguay, on the southern angle of the Gran Chaco. This fort was completely covered by the guns of the fortress.

Colonel Martinez on July 11th had formed the resolution to evacuate Humaitá and on the next and following days transported small groups of sick, wounded, women and children and small quantities of provisions across the river to the forts.

Among the first taken across was the severely wounded Colonel Alén.

Only about 3,000 serviceable soldiers remained with Martinez at Humaitá.

On the 16th of July at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Paraguayans noticed movements of troops in the hostile camp, which pointed the contemplated attack.

A general alarm was given and each company, battalion and regiment hastened to its assigned place at the breast-works. Colonel Martinez mounted his horse to discover the point against which the enemies were directing the assault.

The allies, 30,000 strong, advanced towards the fortress but most of them soon halted and Martinez observed that the main attack was aimed at the north-east side of Humaitá. He sent 2,000 men hurriedly to that place and ordered the artillery to fire only with cannister and shrapnell and to reserve their fire until the enemy had approached to the outer rim of the glacis.

The third Brazilian army corps 12,000 strong, under the command of General Osorio made the attack at this place.

The Brazilian troops were formed as if on parade. The infantry was formed in attacking columns, a brigade of artillery and a battalion of pioneers was placed in the gaps between the columns and a brigade of cavalry acted as a reserve.

With bands playing and colors flying in the wind, the Brazilians advanced in magnificent style, as if on a parade

ground. They grew more confident of victory with every step. Humaitá was theirs certainly as they had already crossed the belt of rifle-pits and abatis without a shot from the Paraguayans. It was evident that they had lost heart and would surrender unconditionally to the brave and lion-hearted Brazilians. Such were the thoughts which agitated the breasts of the attacking soldiers.

They had reached the glacis — and then — a thunder, a crash, and a hailstorm of grape and cannister and shrapnell, hurled from the muzzles of 68- and 24-pounder cannon swept into their ranks so unexpectedly and with such overwhelming and destructive force, that they halted, turned and broke into hasty flight, leaving 2,000 dead comrades on the field.

This brilliant repulse of the assault was an unpleasant surprise to the allies and convinced them that the garrison of Humaitá was far from being discouraged and subdued.

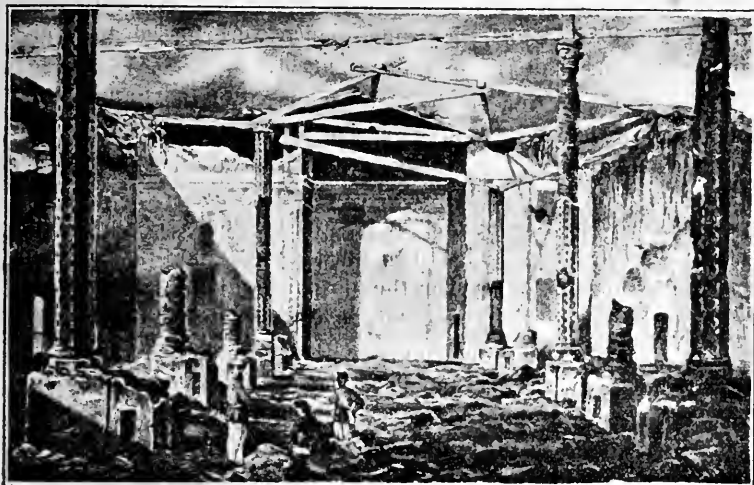
General Caballero, the commander of Timbó, when he heard of the magnificent success of Colonel Martinez, was induced to resume again the offensive. He attacked the position of General Rivas, on the road from Humaitá to Timbó, was at first successful, inflicting a loss of 400 men and two chiefs of battalions on the Argentimans, but was finally compelled to retreat again.

Deprived of all means of subsistence and unable to hold the fortress, Colonel Martinez resolved upon its evacuation. The work was begun in the night of July 24th.

He had at his disposition 30 boats and on them 1,200 men were ferried over to the opposite bank within eight hours. It was done so quietly and cautiously that it escaped the observation of the hostile fleet.

At dawn of the next day, Martinez fired a salute of 21 guns in honor of Supremo's birthday. The bands were ordered upon the walls of the entrenchments to furnish cheerful music. This little stratagem, as it was intended to do, convinced the allies, that, as had been customary for years, this annual feast day would be spent in dancing and carousing by the Paraguayans. The music ceased toward midnight and at five o'clock the next morning, after all the guns had been spiked and made useless, the last man had left Humaitá. The

whole garrison occupied the little fort on the Gran Chaco bank opposite the chain battery of Humaitá.



Ruins of the Church at Humaitá.

The allies learned of the evacuation of Humaitá only ten hours later and hastened to occupy the place.

The great object of the former garrison of Humaitá was now to reach Fort Timbó. This seemed almost impossible. General Rivas, in his fortified camp blocked the only road leading to Timbó along the river and the half-starved Paraguayans soldiers could not risk an assault on his defences.

The only chance of escape remaining was by crossing the Laguna Acayunasa, two and one half kilometers in width extending between the said lagune and the fort in which the Paraguayans were now quartered.

Martinez, after having notified General Caballero of his purpose, had 30 boats, with almost superhuman efforts, brought from the river to the laguna.

The sick and wounded and women were first transported to the north shore of the lagune, where they were received and placed in safety by detachments of Paraguayan troops.

The wounded Colonel Alén was one of the first taken across and brought to Fort Timbó.

General Rivas fired upon and smashed some of the boats when more than one attempted to cross the lagune at the same time. The Paraguayans, in consequence were forced to continue the transfer of troops only at night.

The army of General Rivas was increased to 10,000 men and the Brazilian fleet sent 60 armed boats into the lagune.

The situation of the retreating Paraguayans became worse than desperate.

Rivas swept the lagune, four square kilometers in extent, with his 11 cannons and 11,000 muskets and the Brazilian fleet raked its shores. Wherever the despairing Paraguayans looked, not the smallest opening for an escape offered itself.

Desperate, bitter, determined fights occurred at night between the Brazilian and the Paraguayan boats on the lagune. They did not always end in favor of the former but to the Paraguayans, every boat lost in these encounters meant the destruction of a hope.

If a boat succeeded in making a landing on the opposite shore, those saved jumped ashore with loud shouts of exultation and the boat returned for another load.

The men were reduced to living skeletons.

General Rivas, to end this terrible state of affairs, ordered a general attack, which incredible as it may appear, was magnificently repulsed by the starved, exhausted and despairing Paraguayans.

Rivas, on the 2nd of August, sent a soldier under a flag of truce to offer a pardon to the brave Paraguayans. Martinez ordered his men to open fire on the white flag.

The Argentine general, two days later, again sent men to negotiate for a surrender. They were admitted at this time as the Paraguayan soldiers had not had a morsel to eat for the last four days.

When General Rivas held a conference with Colonel Martinez in regard to the terms of the surrender, the latter was so weak that he could scarcely speak and could only stand up supported by two officers.

The rest of the former garrison of Humaitá, 1,200 in number and one third of them wounded, were made prisoners of war but the officers retained their side-arms.

The prisoners were at once amply provided with provisions and transported to Paso Pocu to be fed and clad at that place. The allies, during the whole war treat their prisoners of war with a noble consideration and magnanimity, thereby inciting the Marshal-President to the greatest fury.

Lopez declared all these soldiers who had fought so nobly and heroically, who had given hundred-fold proofs of their devotion, faithfulness and selfsacrificing spirit, but who were at last forced to capitulate, to be traitors to their country and their innocent wives had to suffer from his brutal vengeance



In the Camp of a Tyrant.

The Supremo, with the rapidity of lightning, had abandoned his former positions and occupied a new one on the north bank of the Rio Tebicuary, a tributary of the Rio Paraguay.

As early as the month of March, three batteries, consisting of 16 heavy guns, had been erected on the right bank of the Tebicuary, near its mouth, where it is 1500 feet in width. They were considered sufficient protection for the new camp of Lopez, at San Fernando, ten kilometers farther up stream.

The region around the camp was low, flat and swampy. The innumerable little ponds and lagoons and the ever flow of the river into the wide low bottoms gave it the appearance of a broad lake studded with little islands covered with woods and thickets and with single trees occasionally rising from the shallow water.

The village of San Fernando is built on a slightly elevated ridge.

The greatest part of the troops camped in the mire and morass, but the utmost cleanliness was the rule, due to an iron discipline.

Barracks for the companies, constructed of tree-trunks and grass and reeds, rose as if by magic. Streets and alleys were carefully surveyed and staked off and the whole camp had an aspect surprisingly symmetrical.

The soldiers walked around almost naked. The skin of an animal, for the sake of decency slung around the hips, constituted the uniform. A belt with the cartridge box and the keen-edged *macheta* was buckled around the waist. Every Paraguayan, besides, carried two leather thongs around his neck. To one was fastened the picture of his patron Saint and to the other a comb. A military regulation compelled every soldier to comb himself three times a day — a wise precaution under the circumstance, and the rule was rigorously enforced. A leather cap, the only piece of the uniform which the state was now able to provide, covered the head.

The residence of the Supremo was built in the centre of the camp. It was a square structure, surrounded by a verandah, enclosed by palisades, guarded by his body-guard and accessible only to a few generals and Colonels.

Even the bishop, until now the intimate keeper of Lopez' conscience, was not permitted to reside within the palisades.

A modest building, for the use of the bishop, was erected opposite to the headquarters and at a distance of a hundred paces from it.

An elegant, tasteful, octagonal chapel was built on the space between the residences of the bishop and the Supremo. Lopez was now in the habit of attending divine service daily, frequently remaining as much as four hours at a time. He entered the chapel and returned crawling on his knees, beating his breast with his fist, he prostrated himself before the altar, tore his hair and demeaned himself like the most wicked and contrite of sinners.

And yet, at the very time when the Supremo was taken with an acute attack of piety, he grew bloodthirsty and began to commit acts of injustice and cruelty truly bestial.

Something like a sultry, oppressive atmosphere hung over the camp.

No one dared to speak to another but what was absolutely necessary, because the utterance of an unguarded word might cost him his life, and yet, rumours of the contemplated

extermination of all prominent Paraguayans and of all foreign inhabitants, floated around the camp.

A system of espionage flourished at this time in the country to such an extent that the son dared not to trust his father nor the brother confide in his brother. No one ventured to write a few lines as even the possession of paper, pen and ink was suspicious and dangerous.

Strangers, generally police officers and priests, now frequently made their appearance in camp, conferred with General Resquin and disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

The Supremo, repeatedly and as early as the beginning of July, had told Colonel Jorge Thompson, the commander of the fort at the mouth of the Tebicuary, that the hostile fleet of ironclads would make an attempt on July 24th, the Marshal-President's birthday, to pass the batteries and that the colonel must take all precautions to prevent the passage.

It came as Lopez had predicted.

The armored vessels «Bahia» and «Silvado» and the monitor «Rio Grande» on that day, came up the Rio Paraguay, entered the Rio Tebicuary and with full steam passed the batteries. The vessels were hit a number of times but the solid shot burst into a thousand splinters when it struck the solid, heavy plates.

Three persons, during the passage, appeared on the roof of the tower of the «Bahia.» One of them was Lieutenant Luciano Recalde of the Paraguayan legion, who motioned with a pocket handkerchief and called out something which was not understood by the garrison.

Thompson at once telegraphed to Lopez that the fleet had passed. He was immediately asked the question: what signal did the first ship make in passing? The telegraph operator had already reported the occurrence to Lopez. Thompson telegraphed, that upon questioning his men, they stated that in the individual making the signal, they had recognized Recalde. An answer came from the Supremo full of the wickedest curses and imprecations against all traitors to their country and expressing his astonishment that the batteries should have permitted men to pass who open their filthy mouths against patriots defending their country. Lopez was pacified when Thompson informed him that the three men on the ironclad had in

return been most thoroughly, vindictively and shamefully abused by his own men.

The Marshal-President tried to hold Thompson responsible for the fact that Recalde had pushed his head out of the tower of the «Bahia.»

Groups of prisoners, of both sexes, coming from all directions, arrived in camp daily. The men commonly with heavy irons, so-called grillos, on their legs. The prisoners were huddled together in an open, shelterless pen, surrounded by palisades. They belonged to the leading families of the land or were foreigners residing in different parts of the country.

Numerous arrests were made, not only among private citizens but also among the high officers of the army. These arrests were frequently associated with a degradation to the rank of a common soldier.

The next issue of the *Semanario* then explained these astonishing occurrences to the surprised soldiers. They were told that one of the wealthiest of Paraguayan families had started a widespreading conspiracy with the object of betraying the country and to desert to the enemy on the 24th day of July. The wicked scheme of these «*hombres malos*» (bad men) had been opportunely discovered and frustrated by the energy and circumspection of his Excellency, the Marshal-President and that these fiendish traitors would receive their well deserved reward.

Lopez suddenly discarded his garb of piety and gave full vent to his brutal, tiger-like nature and blood-thirstiness when he learned that Humaitá had fallen. To prove that he had completely broken off all relations with the church, he had Bishop Palacios, the Dean Bogado and a dozen other priests arrested and thrown into the army-prison.

General Brugnuez, chief of artillery, had been arrested a few days before. This man had proved himself a brave, faithful and able officer during the whole war. His conduct during the early part of the war had been highly meritorious. His skilful and rapid manoeuvres on the Riachuelo, at Bella Vista and at Cuevas, in 1865, had inflicted such terrific damages on the Brazilian fleet, that it was crippled and paralyzed for two years, and was charged with cowardice by the Argentine press.

The next morning after his arrest, without any previous trial, and upon the express order from Lopez, Bruquez was executed in a horrible manner. Lashed to a tree with lassos, he recived the bayonet stabs of 30 soldiers marching past him in single file, until, after enduring the torture and indescribable anguish for sometime, he perished.

The executions now increased at an extraordinary rate. They took place twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. The death penalty was executed in the form of shooting, stabbing with lance or bayonet or flogging. Throat-cutting was not in vogue but it was practiced by the brutal soldiery, if the prisoners broke down on the weary march, and, in spite of flogging, were unable to proceed.

The case was then reported «that P.P. died on his way to prison.»

Among the most notable of the prisoners, who, half-naked and starving, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather in the open pen and shackled with heavy irons crawled around through the mire and filth of the prison were: Benigno and Venancio Lopez, the brother of the Marshal-President; Borges, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Carreras, secretary of the interior; Saturnino Bedoya, treasurer; Colonel Alén, the severely wounded, former commander of Humaitá; the director of telegraphs Fischer von Treuenfels, the Portuguese consul Leite-Perreira; the attachés of the North-American embassy Vliess and Masterman, the British mason Taylor, the German merchants Hamann and Nenmann; the German jeweller Fuellgraf, the Brazilian Major Albuquerque; Bishop Palacios, the Deaps Bogado and Alfaro, the Argentine Colonels Lottero and Lopez, the Oriental Colonel Laguna, Captain Fidanza of the navy, and, a little later, General Barrios, the brother-in-law of the Supremo. The last mentioned attempted to cut his throat in prison, but failed, and in consequence was fettered so as to prevent a repetition. There were, besides those named, hundreds of prominent civil officers, army officers, priests, foreigners and private citizens.

The imprisoned ladies, nearly all belonging to the aristocratic classes, enjoyed the privilege that they were not shackled and received a cowhide for a couch. That was all. They had to camp in the open air the same as the male prisoners, re-

ceived the same scanty, unwholesome prison fare and, at night, were chained to the block

Among the female prisoners could be noted the two sisters of the Supremo, and the mother, wife and sisters of Colonel Martinez, the last and heroic defender of Humaitá, who, after a most stubborn resistance in the Gran Chaco, was compelled to surrender to the Argentine General Rivas at the Laguna Acayunasa.

When the venerable mother of Lopez came to the camp from San Fernando and begged for the lives of her two sons, his brothers, she too became an object of suspicion and was thrown into prison by her unnatural son.

The daily life of these doomed victims was an endless chain of suffering, hunger and privations.

The male prisoners enjoyed the liberty of freely moving about within the pen during the day. At night, from six o'clock in the afternoon until sunrise, they were fettered to prevent escape. Lassos were stretched between poles driven into the ground, and to these lassos, in groups of twenty to thirty, the prisoners were tied for the night with leather thongs. Ranged in rows, stretched on the damp, slimy ground, they rested, suffered and slept.

The female prisoners, mostly wives and young girls down to fourteen years of age, couching on cowhides, occupied an outer circle extending around the male prisoners.

The sun has risen and ascends higher and higher toward the zenith.

All these victims crave a drink of water and desire to cleanse themselves.

Nothing of the kind is granted at present.

A young officer with 30 soldiers with loaded guns arrives at ten o'clock. The officer, with the chivalresque bearing of a hidalgo, invites the ladies to follow him to the little grove adjoining to satisfy human necessity for the next twenty-four hours.

How many ladies and virgins, of tender and delicate feeling and sentiment, could be induced, after horrible torture, to obey the iron demands of nature, in the presence of thirty strange, rude, armed men, standing around.

But distress and necessity banished all rules of decency.

The male prisoners were permitted the same favor an hour later.

The prisoners during these proceedings, had to bring their daily supply of water from the lagoon near by. If anyone was without a vessel for the purpose, so much the worse for him, but nearly everyone had secured the horn of an ox in which he could fetch and keep the necessary amount of water.

An angel, in the shape of a negro, called Elizalde, appeared at noon. He brought a tub filled with boiled meat placed on a cart, and halted outside the palisades. With his grimy fingers he picked out the pieces of meat and threw them on the sand before the prisoners.

Those of the victims, who managed to grasp a larger chunk of meat than their co-sufferers, shouted with glee.

Elizalde returned towards five o'clock and distributed another quantity of meat in the same manner.

The rations of meat received by each prisoner at noon and in the afternoon weighed about two ounces and were cooked without salt.

This was the only nourishment which the prisoners received.

Only he, who for months has been deprived of the use of salt, can understand the torture caused by such deprivation. Everyone knows that, without this article, furnished us by nature, good digestion becomes impossible at last. Dysentery, typhus and imbecility degenerating into lunacy are the logical results of such a deprivation.

The prisoners, in consequence, became so emaciated, miserable and sick that they resembled living skeletons more than human beings,

At sunset, and later, in the morning too, an officer of the guard read aloud a list of names. Those, whose names had been called, were freed from their shackles, taken to a clearing in the adjoining forest and there shot. The corpses were then robbed of their scanty garments, which were considered by the soldiers as rightly their booty.

Absolutely vile was the treatment of the ladies who camped around the fettered men. Not only were they compelled to see and hear the bestial brutalities, but they had to submit to them, until their hour of deliverance arrived, when they were

taken to the place of execution, where a volley ended their young, innocent, dishonored lives.

A large rancho or hut, built of reeds and rushes, adjoining the palisades around the residence of Lopez, served as a palace of justice. This house of Themis was surrounded by a close fence to prevent any unauthorized individual from casting a look into the court-room.

Three fiscals,* administered justice in this building. Each one of them prosecuted, tried and judged, complainant and judge in the same person. Two subalterns, *chombres de confianza*,» (trustees) were also present to assist in the administration of justice by applying the torture and forcing a confession from stubborn defendants.

It was characteristic of this court-room that neither paper nor ink, nor pens were used. But lassos, hammers, grillos, rusty muskets and a bundle of bambu canes could be observed in a corner.

Within the palisades and adjoining the court-room a closed pavillion was erected, whence, lounging in his hammock, Lopez could hear and see everything transpiring in the court of justice. Round holes had been cut in the partition wall for this purpose. The fiscals knew this fact and knowing that they were observed, endeavored to manifest at the trials, a servility and adulation beyond all limit.

Everyone, once accused, was guilty, because Lopez had ordered it.

If the idolatry and low servility of the Guaranis for the Supremo is taken into consideration, the result of these investigations can readily be conjectured.

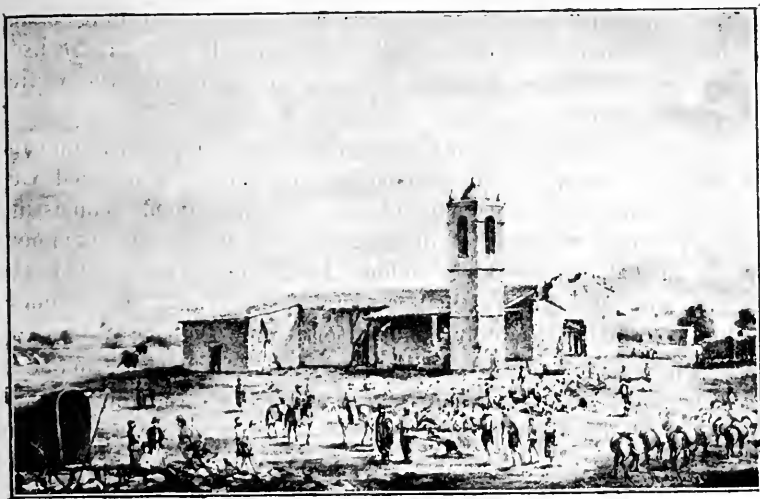
The charges brought against the prisoners were nearly all those of high treason. Some were accused of participation in a conspiracy against the life of the Supremo, some that they had contributed money for revolutionary purposes, some that they had been accomplices in forwarding treasonable correspondence, others that they had been guilty of defalcations and of robbing the public treasury etc., etc.

Such a conspiracy never existed in the Republic of Uruguay. It was simply impossible under the prevailing conditions.

*- Military prosecuting attorney's

The accused, who were tried and judged in secret, always declared themselves innocent of the charges, as they could in truth and with a clear conscience.

So much the worse for them. The fiscals ordered the torture to force a confession from the obdurate victims and the two subalterns, with diabolical pleasure, began their work.



Church at La Villeta Hospital of the Paraguayans.

The torture, of which there were several grades, was applied according to the pleasure and direction of the fiscal.

The mildest form was the rivetting of three grillos or heavy irons to the legs, so that the accused could not walk but was compelled to crawl.

Another form was the Cepo Uruguayano or the Uruguayan block. The victim had to squat on the ground, his hands were tied together below the knees, a gun was stuck through between arms and knees and three to six muskets were placed on the neck. Leather thongs, running through rings on the floor and over the ends of the muskets, were then drawn so tight that the accused was rolled up in the shape of a ball. He was left in this condition until he confessed or made depositions which were satisfactory to his judges. Many died of apoplexy while fastened in the Cepo Uruguayano.

Another form was the stretching or the «*cuadro estacados*» (four stakes) in which the accused was thrown upon the ground, face downward, cords, fastened to hands and feet, were drawn tight over four stakes driven into the ground so that he lay stretched out in the form of the cross of St. Andrew. This as a rule, was done in the open space in front of the hall of justice, when the sun shone with scorching effect and thousands of blow-flies filled the air. If still the accused refused to confess, flogging was resorted too until the victim yielded or died.

It would require too much space to enumerate all the means of torture employed to force confessions from the doomed victims. Only two more methods may be mentioned, consisting in smashing the ends of the fingers with heavy iron hammers and in dislocating the shoulder by tying cords around the wrist, holding the arm in horizontal position and then wrenching it from its socket by sudden jerks and swings.

It was undoubtedly the best policy for the prisoners to plead guilty at once ; they saved themselves the torture, and execution, one way or another, was sure to follow.

How the fiscals fared at the hands of Lopez, if they were too lenient at the trial or betrayed a spark of humanity in their breasts, may be shown by the following instance.

The fiscal Cayetano examined Don Begnigno, the brother of the Marshal-President. The accused, loaded with heavy chains and worn out with an inquiry lasting five hours, begged the favor to be allowed to sit and rest a few moments. Starved and exhausted, as he was, he declared he could not proceed without completely breaking down. Cayetano permitted it and even had a glass of water brought for the sufferer.

This act of humanity on the part of a fiscal was an unpardonable crime. That he failed to properly use heat, thirst and exhaustion and thus neglected to improve a fine opportunity for obtaining a confession, looked suspicious.

Cayetano was sent for an hour later. Lopez charged him with having shown too great leniency, accused him of being an accomplice of his brother, had him arrested and placed in irons. After suffering cruel treatment for weeks Cayetano, one day, heard his name called as the fatal list was read by

the officer. With some other victims he was taken to the dreaded clearing and shot.

The common soldiers were secretly pleased to see a haughty aristocracy cut down in this manner. Yet they were also well aware that over each one of them hung the sword of Damocles, which at any moment could and did descend on some unfortunate with destructive force. No one felt save. Everybody suspected everybody else. All intercourse, all conversation ceased and distrust, suspicion, denunciations and espionage ruled the camp.

Colonel Thompson one day came up to San Fernando to make a report to Lopez. He had to wait for some time in the court within the palisades as the Supremo happened to be engaged in other business.

An old sergeant of the guard with grey hairs and covered with wounds, joined him and the two engaged in a conversation.

The adjutant of the Supremo came five minutes later and arrested and took away the old sergeant. The Colonel was requested, at the same time, to follow the adjutant. He was taken to a little hut and told not to leave it. A guard was placed before the door.

Paper, ink and pen were brought to Colonel Thompson an hour afterwards, with the order to write down the contents of the conversation with the sergeant.

The Colonel complied with the order.

The conversation had been of the most innocent even childish nature, but Thompson wrote down conscientiously. The old sergeant had inquired of the colonel: if he would wear the handsome Paraguayan uniform after his return to England? If the Queen of Great Britain were as beautiful as Madame Lynch? If the Queen always wore her golden crown on her head when she took a drive? etc., etc.

The written document was called for the next morning at eight o'clock. The colonel went to Lopez at half an hour later and was courteously and amiably received. They discussed the question of the erection of new forts. The Supremo did not mention anything about the affair with the sergeant.

The written answers of Colonel Thompson came too late to save the life of the old sergeant. He had been shot at seven

o'clock in company with two other soldiers who were guilty of the heinous offence of having taken water from the Supremo's exclusive well. There was a possibility, that by this means, they could have attempted to poison the well.

Only Elisa Lynch, although her most intimate friend, the wife of Colonel Martinez, had been imprisoned, flogged and menaced with death, was happy, cheerful and content and knew how to turn to advantage the most doleful of circumstances. Her shrewdness and thrift to increase her material wealth never deserted her.

Dr. Stuart, the surgeon general of the army, was one day called to Madame. She was inconsolable, wrung her hands and with tears in her eyes, exclaimed: «O ! Doctor ! I fear the President is contemplating something which I shall never forgive him.» After a brief conversation, in which she intimated that the doctor's life was in imminent danger, she requested of him his promissory note for 4,000 pounds sterling, which he gave to save his life. Dr. Stuart was subsequently sued on this promissory note in the city of Edinburgh. Elisa Lynch had managed to dispose of this negotiable paper in the market of Europe.

What was the cause of this sanguinary raging of the tyrant ?

Lopez recognized the fact that the resources of his country were completely exhausted and that his glory had come to an end. Filled with groundless suspicion and fierce hatred towards all intelligent and prominent persons who saw through his selfish schemes he resolved to get rid of them by extermination and to appropriate to himself their wealth. Distrust and greed were the motive forces which made Lopez the mad and bloodthirsty tyrant, compared to whom, Nero and Tiberius appear meek and gentle. This was the cause of all the arrests, ill usage, torture and executions of generals, aristocrats, ministers, priests, merchants and nearly all the foreigners.

Lopez evacuated the camp at San Fernando on August 25th and, retreating before the advance of the allied army, took up a new position, with his army, at the *Lomas* (hills) behind the Rio Piquysyry, a small tributary of the Rio Paraguay. During the eight weeks preceding that date, 267 persons had fallen victims to his suspicion, avarice and rage.

The Lomas Ita-Yvaté and Cumbarity.

At the end of December 1868, the Marshal-President had completed the fortifications of his new camp on the north bank of the Rio Piquysry and his army, now reduced to 12,000 men, made itself quite comfortable in the new quarters.

A line of fortifications, with projecting angles, extended along the north side of the river, from its mouth to a point nine kilometers up stream. The river meanders through a series of broad deep swamps and marshes. The entrenchments were mounted with 100 cannon and 8,000 soldiers were detached to defend them. General Caballeros received the command of the works.

About one kilometer to the north of the western terminus of these entrenchments, at the narrowest point of the Rio Paragnay, called Angostura, Lopez erected a shore battery of fifteen heavy guns and placed it under the command of Colonel Thompson.

His headquarters were erected on the Loma Ita-Yvaté and the mayoria and the prisons were established on the Loma Cumbarity, also sometimes called the Loma Valentina.

Ita-Yvaté was a tabooed hill. No one specially authorized dared to approach and ascend it. Everything was arranged so as to deceive and hoodwink foreign ambassadors who came here on a mission from their government to obtain the release of their imprisoned countrymen.

The highest point of Ita-Yvaté was occupied by the tasteful, spacious, verandah-surrounded residence of the Marshal-President.

The body-guard, dressed in new, complete, faultless uniforms, also camped on this hill. They knew nothing of want and starvation. Every resident of Ita-Yvaté sought to demonstrate in an extravagant manner, his unswerving loyalty to the Supremo and to the cause he represented.

Here were received and deceived the ambassadors of North America, France, Italy, Portugal and England. The last mentioned could not be imposed upon and saw clearly through the fraud and duplicity. The North American minister, blinded by the apparent mildness, nobility, magnanimity and selfsacrificing spirit of the Supremo, became an enthusiastic champion of the bloodthirsty tyrant.

This ambassador was the North American General MacMahon. He afterwards escorted, without the least molestation, seven loaded carts decorated with the flag of the Union, through the lines of the allies.

The carts and their contents were considered and respected as the property of a neutral state. Not one of the allies made a move even to examine the contents although the public funds, the property of the state, consisting of gold and silver, was deposited in and carried off by the carts. The public treasury and the private purse of the President were considered identical in Paraguay from 1860 to 1870. General MacMahon undertook and succeeded in exporting and bringing to a place of safety the public funds for the benefit of the dictator, Madame Lynch and their children.

Shortly before the arrival of General MacMahon, the North American Commodore Davis, through his energetic demands, had been successful in procuring the release of Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, two attachés of the North American embassy. They had been arrested, placed in irons and suffered for months in prison. They were put on board the gunboat «Shamokin» and taken to Buenos Aires. It was a circumstance highly advantageous to Lopez and his heirs.

The statements made by Bliss and Masterman concerning their brutal treatment at the hands of the tyrant Lopez, were received with incredulity. They seemed too monstrous to be true. The narrative of the two attachés fell far short of the full truth. It was only a dim and faint reflex of the almost incredible atrocities daily committed by Lopez.

The foreign gunboats «Dotterell» of the English, «Veloce» of the Italian and «Decidée» of the French navy had, with the consent of the Brazilian Admiral Inhauma, run the blockade and were anchored above Angostura, the place fortified by Lopez.

The commanders of these gunboats, received by Lopez in the most hearty, hospitable and courteous manner, were commissioned to demand the release and take on board any subjects of their respective governments, who were detained by force in Paraguayan prisons.

These Captains, deceived by what they observed at Itayvatè, and not being permitted to proceed any farther, gave full credit to the hypocritical declarations of Lopez. He assured them that he would gladly surrender the prisoners to them, if he had the power, but as they had been guilty of serious crimes and misdemeanors, it was beyond his authority to interfere with the course of law in the Paraguayan courts of justice.

Paraguay ! — Lopez ! — Courts of Justice !

What a Mockery !

The prison-pens at the mayoria were kept full with new arrivals, notwithstanding that executions took place every evening.

A German merchant was executed at San Fernando shortly before its evacuation. Haman died, in consequence of tortures and privations, immediately after his arrival at the lomas. The German jeweller Füllgraf, in company with 45 fellow-sufferers, among them Venancio Lopez, a brother of the Supremo, was shot a few days later.

Major Palacios, one of the most loyal of creatures of Lopez and second in command at headquarters was degraded to the rank of a private, thrown into prison and placed in irons.

There was not in the whole country a man of note or a foreigner who had not been shot or was not detained in prison.

The only exception to this was the venerable Colonel Wisner von Morgenstern, an Austrian. The old gentlemen had suffered for years from rheumatism at Asuncion, so that he was absolutely helpless. He had been held in high esteem by the father of the Marshal-President. This fact, although a high grade of filial love and respect cannot be expected in a man who threw his own mother into prison, and the consideration that the old colonel would presumably soon die a natural death, saved this officer from any molestation. At any rate, Colonel Wisner von Morgenstern was the only foreigner who escaped the general fate.

The old Fieldmarshal Caxias, spurred on by ambition, now made spasmodic efforts to terminate the weary war by a complete victory of the allies and to drive Lopez from Paraguay,—the real object of the conflict. He was roused to this energy by news from Rio de Janeiro. The imperial government informed him, that if until January 8th 1869, the day of meeting the Brazilian chambers, he could not gain an effective victory, a peace would be arranged under conditions, as a majority of the chambers belonged to the peace party.

The war had not been popular in the Argentine Republic from the beginning and the demands for its cessation now grow louder from day to day.

Caxia had, since September, occupied a position at Las Palmas, about 5 kilometers south of the Paraguayan entrenchments on the Rio Piquysry. He resolved to turn the right flank of the enemy by a march through the Gran Chaco and to attack him in the rear.

General Argollo with the first Brazilian army corps was transferred across the river and ordered into the trackless wilderness of the Gran Chaco to open a road to a point opposite Villeta. This was accomplished in four weeks and Caxias, with an army of 32,000 men, marched northward over the newly finished road.

The Argentines, Orientals, 3,000 Brazilians and nearly all the artillery remained at Las Palmas. The Fieldmarshal took only 12 light fieldpieces with him.

As soon as Lopez was informed of the movement and purpose of the allies, he ordered General Caballero with 5,000 men and 72 guns to defend the bridge across the Itororo, a little river 25 kilometers to the north of Ita-Yvaté.

Caxias, on the 6th of December, attacked the bridge in front with the 1st and 2nd army corps under the command of Generals Argollo and Bittancourt and ordered General Osorio, with the 3rd corps, to turn the right flank of the enemy. Osorio came when the battle, which had raged for two hours, was over. The bridge had been taken. The Paraguayans had to yield to a superiority of numbers, but not until after a stubborn resistance. The Brazilians lost 3,000 men and among the seriously wounded was the brave General Argollo.

General Caballero lost 1,200 men, all dead, and six guns.

Fieldmarshall Caxias, on the 11th of December, moved his army toward the Arroyo (creek) Avay, seven kilometers south of the Itororo. General Osorio, with the 3rd corps led the advance, followed by the 1st and 2nd corps. The cavalry division of General Triunfo covered the right and that under General Menna Barreto protected the left wing.

Lopez placed 3000 infantry, 1000 cavalry and 12 guns under the command of General Caballero on the south bank of Arroyo Avay and with this force ordered this general to defend the ford through the creek.

The rain poured down in torrents when, at noon, the Brazilians advanced to the assault. The fight was excessively bitter. The Paraguayans would not yield and the Brazilians were determined to cross the arroyo at all hazards. The passage was forced and the Paraguayan cannon captured after a sanguinary battle of four hours duration.

The Paraguayan force was almost annihilated. Of the 4000 men, who entered the battle, only 240, and these covered with wounds, returned to Ita-Yvaté.

General Caballero, at one time during the fight, was surrounded by Brazilian cavalry. They had grasped his poncho, which he slipped suddenly over his head, cut down two troopers in his way and, dashing off in a gallop, made his way to the headquarters of the Supremo.

The Brazilians lost 4000 men and among them the intrepid leader General Qsoria, who was seriously wounded.

Lopez was not prepared for these heavy, successive blows. He feared the depressing effect of these defeats on his army, which was now reduced to 7000 men, and he knew that he must do something to again inspire his troops and to inflame their fanaticism anew. He was a master in that art. Dances were arranged every night in the camp, and Lopez furnished a liberal supply of caña-liquor and slaughter oxen for the *carne con cuero**. Fiery addresses by the Supremo, which inflamed the Guaranis to madness, were read aloud to the soldiers by the officers. The speeches were answered by [rousing cheers for the Marshal-President and loud, wicked imprecations and curses hurled against the enemies of their country.

*]- Beef roasted in the hide.

Once thoroughly aroused, Fieldmarshal Caxias never relaxed and was firmly determined to end the Supremo's career of glory.

He ordered General Triunfo with 2500 cavalry at one o'clock on the morning of December 21st to reconnoitre the region to the eastward of the Lomas Cumbarity and Ita-Yvaté. General Menna Barreto, with 400 cavalry was sent at the time to pass to the west of these fortified hills and to make an attack from the rear on the Paraguayan entrenchments on the Piquysry, which were defended by 1500 men with 30 cannon.

General Menna Barreto's attack was successful. The assault was too sudden for the Paraguayans to turn their guns. The cannons were captured after a brief but bloody fight. One thousand Paraguayans, who refused to surrender, were cut down and 500 of them succeeded in cutting their way through to Colonel Thompson at Angostura.

General Triunfo, on his reconnaissance, captured several Paraguayan cavalry-pickets, a transport of wounded soldiers accompanied by 1000 women intended to be sent to Cerro Leon, and 4000 head of cattle.

That same afternoon Caxias bombarded the Lomas Ita-Yvaté and Cumbarity for an hour, after which the infantry advanced to attack the north and west side of the Paraguayan position.

The conflict swayed to and fro. The Paraguayans made several daring sallies charging the slowly advancing Brazilians at the point of the bayonet, but were driven back by the superior fire of musketry. The extreme northerly entrenchment of Cumbarity was in the hands of the Brazilians at sundown and they proceeded at once to raze the walls. Fourteen guns were captured in these entrenchments.

Lopez had his tent removed to the woods eastward of Ita-Yvaté and put the same in telegraphic communication with his headquarters as soon as the Brazilians opened fire upon the two lomas that afternoon. From this tent he directed the battle. He evidently feared that the enemies would capture the second line of defences, for he ordered everything to be put in readiness for immediate flight and also the execution of the most prominent of his prisoners.

Here is a list of the names of the victims who were shot by order of the Marshal-President on the 21st December 1868.

Benigno Lopez, the youngest brother of the dictator.

General Barrios, the brother-in-law of the dictator.

Bishop Palacios.

Borges, minister of cult and of public instruction.

Carreras, minister of the interior.

Bedoya, minister of finance.

Leita-Pereira, Portuguese consul.

Colonel Alén, former commander of Humaitá.

Wife, mother and sister of Colonel Martinez.

Dean Bogado.

Captain Fianza.

Three priests, two private citizens, an Argentine colonel and two Brazilian naval officers.

In all 21 persons.

Lopez in the event of the delivery of these prisoners by the Brazilians, feared their disclosures and their revenge. For this reason, although the knife was now at his own throat, he secured the eternal silence of these unfortunates.

The body-guard of the Supremo had been under fire that afternoon, for the first time during the war and had been almost exterminated. The cannoneers, manning the batteries behind the low walls, were mostly cripples, many of them having the use of only one arm or one leg. Everyone, without regard to person or sex, fought in the ranks of the Paraguayans. Physicians, officers of the intendantur, priests and even women clad in a chemise only, had taken up a gun or wielded a lance. The women were also employed to carry the severely wounded soldiers to the woods.

The following day was spent in fruitless skirmishing. A Brazilian battallion at times would make an assault but was flung back, each time with serious losses.

Caxius, on the 23rd of December, ordered the army corps at Las Palmas, 10,000 strong, to advance, cross the Piquisry and post 43 cannons on the Loma Auxilio.

When Lopez observed this movement from the summit of Ita-Yvaté, he requested the North American ambassador, General Mac Mahon, to take his children, in the carriage of Madame Lynch, to Cerro Leon, a little village situated at the foot

of the Sierra Leona, where he would either follow them or send further directions. General Mac Mahon consented and an hour later, accompanied by the children of the Marshal-President and the engineer Mr. Valpy, was on his way to the east.

The sun rose blood-red on the morning of the 24th. Before he ordered fire to be opened from the forty five 32-pounder Whitworth guns stationed on the Loma Auxilio, Caxias sent a messenger under flag of truce to Lopez demanding his surrender to avoid further unnecessary bloodshed.

Lopez refused to surrender but declared that he was willing to enter into negotiations for peace provided, the honour of his country or the dignity of his person were not affected thereby.

The Brazilian general did not return an answer to this, but waited another twenty-four hours before opening the bombardment, in order to give Lopez ample time to recognize the utter hopelessness of his situation and to reconsider his resolution.

It was in vain.

Caxias bombarded the Paraguayan position for two hours after sunrise on the morning of the 25th. Whereupon the infantry was formed into column for the charge. The Paraguayans beat back every assault with only six guns remaining with them. All the rest had become unfit for service. Nearly all the Paraguayans were wounded that day but that did not cool their ardour nor calm their fanaticism.

Lopez collected the scattered wrecks of his cavalry towards noon, and, adding to them everyone in camp who was mounted, he obtained a body of troopers, 500 strong. This cavalry made a sudden sally against the Brazilians. Fighting bravely and heroically, it was cut to pieces by the numerically far superior cavalry of General Triunfo.

The Brazilians had accomplished nothing when night fell.

The same desultory fighting and skirmishing was continued at dawn on the 26th. The Brazilian infantry repeated the assault again and again, but each time were flung back in discomfiture by the desperate Paraguayans.

Lopez, mounted on a horse, hid himself in the woods, where he could see nothing of the raging battle. His adjutant

and his intrepid consort, Elisa Lynch, were with him. She had sent away her children with General Mac Mahon three days ago, but she remained with her lover to inspire him with her personal courage. She gave ample proof of a disregard of death on this occasion,

She sat, straight and bold, on her spirited horse. With eyes flashing fire and her voluptuous form firmly compressed, she saw the shells crash through the trees, scattering branches and huge pieces of bark, saw and heard them explode in the air, and heard and saw the fragments, dealing death and destruction all around, startling the ear with ominous sounds, strike the ground with a splash and a dull thud. Occasionally her cheeks would turn a shade more pale, but her nerves and her pulse remained steady and her red lips curled themselves into a haughty disdainful smile.

But her lover?

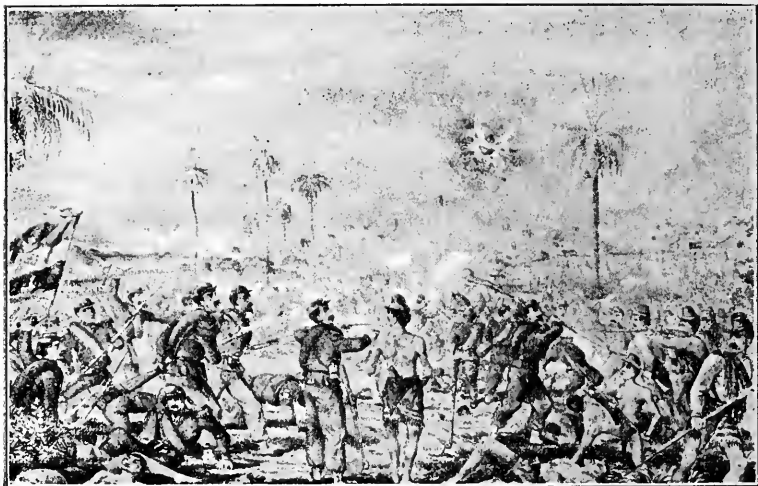
He bowed constantly down to the saddle, the moment he heard the ominous noise of an approaching and passing projectile. Disregarding the compassionate smile of his consort, he flung himself from his horse and threw himself flat on the ground, face downward, whenever a shell burst even at a distance of a hundred paces or more.

He passed a prison-pen some time that day where, among others, his former director of telegraphs Fischer von Trenenfeld and Mr. Taylor, the British mason, were incarcerated. The former made himself known to the cowardly, hypocritical tyrant who seemed utterly astonished that anyone should have the audacity to arrest and place in irons his most faithful friend and servant. He ordered his release at once.

Encouraged by this, the other prisoners rushed forward and throwing themselves on their knees before the despot begged for mercy and liberty.

Be it, that the continuous whistling and crashing of shells admonished him that possibly his last hour was at hand: be it that the fear of soon appearing before the judgment seat of a just and eternal Judge or that he had a strange and unusual attack of mildness, he released all the inmates of this prison and gave them their freedom upon the condition never to undertake anything against his person and against the welfare of the republic.

The prisoners promised everything demanded. They embraced and kissed each other amid laughter and tears of joy and worked themselves into such a paroxysm of joy over their unexpected fortune, that some of them became seriously sick. Rocks were gathered to break the galling shackles. «Welcome! O, golden liberty!»



The allied troops storming the Loma, December 27 1868.

Caxias saw that it would take the Brazilian infantry weeks to capture the Paraguayan fortifications. They lacked the vim and spirit necessary for a successful bayonet charge. It was desirable that he should be able to send the news of a decisive victory to Rio de Janeiro before the 8th of January and he was compelled to employ 2000 Argentine infantry for the attack the next day.

The Argentine troops had done nothing during the whole month of December as it was the purpose of the commander in chief to let the Brazilian troops solely secure the honor and glory of having disposed of Lopez for good.

The Argentine battalions were ordered to attack the southern, the steepest and most difficult side of the entrenchments. They swept across the walls at the first assault and captured fourteen guns, mostly demolished. The western and northern sides were scaled almost simultaneously by the Brazilians and whatever there was left of the Paraguayans was taken pri-

soner. Only the Supremo, accompanied by Madame Lynch and 90 mounted men, succeeded in escaping through the forest to the east.

The Argentine General Gelly y Obes took up his headquarters in the former residence of the Marshal-President on the Loma Ita-Yvaté.

The cavalry division under the command of General Triunfo, sent in pursuit of Lopez, made a very important capture the next day. They took a number of carts, which contained the archives of the dictator and two noted prisoners of state. These were the venerable mother and a younger sister of the Supremo. His eldest sister, widow of the same General Barrios who had been executed seven days ago, was still carried along by Lopez, although he himself had barely escaped capture.

From the captured archives it appeared, that between the 25th of September and the 21st of December 1868, 348 persons had been executed at the lomas. If to these are added the 267 persons who were executed at San Fernando from June 15th until August 25th we have a total of 615 persons executed under a peculiar judicial procedure but in reality innocently murdered.



In the Sierra Mbonaypey.



The fugitive tyrant, accompanied by Madame Lynch, some officers and 90 soldiers of his body-guard, reached Cerro Leon after a brisk six hours ride. This hamlet is situated at the base of the Sierra Mbonaypey, 35 kilometers to the east of Ita-Yvaté. The Supremo, fatigued but not despairing, took up his quarters in a plain, low-roofed house of the village.

He had come to the firm determination, while on the road not to surrender but to continue the war to the knife and to wear out the allies by a stubborn resistance. Madame Lynch

strongly supported his resolution. She was strenuously opposed to a capitulation which involved her lover's banishment from Paraguay.

But to offer any effective resistance, it was necessary, above all things, to have an army, and his whole force at present, consisted only of 90 men. The extraordinary, resourceful energy of the Marshal-President did not abandon him in this most critical emergency, and he found means to accomplish what seemed impossible.

There was at Cerro Leon a military hospital containing 6000 sick and wounded. The reconvalescent were ordered to proceed to the battlefield of the lomas, pick up the scattered arms and articles of accoutrement and bring them to Cerro Leon. Bands of Paraguayans, who had been dispersed at the battles or who had escaped from the allies, came into camp daily.

It seems incredible, that men, who were treated so harshly and brutally as the Paraguayan soldiers were treated by the Marshal-President, should voluntarily return to their tormentor, after having been liberated, fed and clothed by the allies.

The attempt has been made repeatedly, to explain this strange phenomena on the ground of the Paraguayan fervent patriotism and their enthusiasm for their chief in whom, as they were taught to do, they recognized the embodiment of the state.

That was not the case.

The Guarani is no idealist but, on the contrary, is emphatically a realist. All the devotion and loyalty which the Paraguayan had shown during the whole war, sprang from that fierce fanaticism which Lopez had artificially kindled and nourished in their hearts. When his power to inflame this fanaticism was broken, his influence over the fanatics ceased. There must have been another reason, another factor, which induced the Paraguayans to return to Lopez.

This was the reason:

The women and children of the captured and dispersed Paraguayans remained with Lopez, and were in his power. He could punish them in his cruel manner for the crimes and misdemeanors committed by the men, and it would have been considered a heinous offence if the Guarani, escaped from his

captors, had not returned to camp within a week. The Guaranis love their families intensely. This is one of the marked and shining characteristics of this noble, brave and almost extinct race. Care and anxiety about the lives and the welfare of their beloved families were the motive forces which drew the brave Guaranis to Cerro Leon into the talons of the despot. This was the secret of his dominant power over them.

Within seven days, Lopez collected again an army of 5500 men. With this force he moved, on January 4th 1869, to Azcurra, a village 15 kilometers to the north-east of Cerro Leon and situated in the heart of the mountains, on the main pass over the ridge. Azcurra can easily be put in a state of defence. Lopez threw up entrenchments around the place and mounted the walls with five field pieces, which he had managed to save.

He proceeded, without delay, to reorganize and equip the wrecks of his former army. Of his prominent officers there yet remained with him : Generals Resquins and Caballero, Colonel Thompson, Minister Gaminos, Dr. Skinner and the engineer Mr. Valpy. They were required to aid him in his undertaking.

The Supremo, a month before, had ordered the machines and employes of the arsenal at Asunsion to be taken to Caa-capé, a little place five kilometers to the north-east of Azcurra. Colonel Thompson, who was put in charge of the new arsenal, developed such energy and activity that three light field-pieces with full equipment, 150 small arms with bayonets and 600 lances were manufactured every week. Certainly an admirable feat in the midst of a dense wilderness. The iron determination of the Marshal-President managed to provide the necessary material.

The ammunition for the little, newly created army was manufactured in a powder mill situated at Peribebuy, a little hamlet, fifteen leagues to the east of Azcurra. General Caballero, with 1500 men and 15 fieldpieces was sent to this important place to secure it against any possible surprise. He constructed very formidable entrenchments around the hamlet.

One thousand men were detached to protect the sulphur factory at San José, a village 20 kilometers east of Peribebuy.

Only 3000 men with 30 field guns remained in camp with Lopez at Azcurra.

Dr. Stuart, the surgeon-general of the army, had been taken prisoner by the Brazilians on the 28th of December, and his wife and two little children, for that reason, were thrown into the army prison where they suffered intensely from hunger, privation and exposure. Dr. Skinner was appointed in Dr. Stuart's place and it became his chief duty to quickly train a sufficient number of young surgeons or practicans for the army.

The army of the Supremo had melted away to almost nothing on December 27th and yet, within a very brief time thereafter, the fertile genius of the Marshal-President had, in the midst of a wilderness, created, organized, armed and equipped a new army, manufactured artillery and erected extensive fortifications. It was done if by magic.

But to supply the army with provisions was a most difficult problem. Lopez did not know where to obtain them in sufficient quantities. The soldiers were reduced to short rations, and the 150,000 women and children, who accompanied the army, received nothing. They were not sent home, but had to remain, in order that, by threatening to punish them cruelly for the desertion of their husbands, the tyrant held them secure in close allegiance to his person.

It is true, the country, surrounding the camp, produced an abundance of all kinds of wild fruit but it was insufficient for the support of such a vast aggregation of people. More than one hundred thousand women and children died then of starvation within six months.

The reign of terror, inaugurated by the despot and manifesting itself by frequent executions, was, under such conditions, the only means whereby discipline could be maintained.

And the allies ?

They celebrated the victory by a triumphant entry into Asuncion, the deserted capital, on January 1st 1869. They pillaged the city thoroughly, leaving not a pane of glass, nor mirror, nor lock untouched, although the war was ostensibly waged against the tyrant Lopez and not against the people of Paraguay. They made themselves thoroughly at home in the abandoned capital and made arrangements for a new campaign

although it was well-known to them that, on the 27th of December Lopez had escaped with only 90 men.

Such procrastination was too much even for the patient and forbearing government at Rio de Janeiro. Fieldmarshal Marques de Caxias was recalled towards the end of January and created Duque de Tuyuty by the Emperor. He was superseded by the Conde d'Eu, an Orleans, son of the Duke de Nemours, consort of the Crown-princess Isabella and declared heir to the imperial throne. He came to Asuncion and began at once to restore order and to infuse new life into the army.

The new commander-in-chief, then only 27 years of age, was received with general rejoicing by the army. Officers and men were weary of the tedious war, which seemed interminable, with the weak, trifling irresolute policy pursued at the allied headquarters opposed to such an energetic, resourceful and tenacious enemy as Lopez.

The Conde d'Eu, after having reorganized the Brazilian army, selected, as his line of advance, the railroad from Asuncion to the base of Mount Sapucay, a distance of 98 kilometers. This railroad furnished an open road into the interior.

As there was only one railroad engine at Asuncion and that in a delapidated condition, a second engine had to be ordered up from Buenos Aires. The main portion of the army, meantime, marched on foot or on horseback, to the south-east letting the railroad carry the provisions and equipments.

At the middle of the month of March, the van-guard reached the bridge across the delta of the Rio Pirayn, which empties into the Laguna Ypacaray. Lopez had blown up the bridge. It had to be repaired before the provision trains could pass over it, which took eight weeks and the Conde d'Eu did not reach Cerro Leon until the 20th of May.

The Paraguayan positions were reconnoitered in June, whereupon a part of the allied army advanced to the Paraguay and the Rio Ibicuy.

From this point, an infantry division marched westward and a cavalry division advanced southward, toward Peribebuy, which place the allies erroneously took to be the headquarters of Lopez, as it formed the centre of the extended Paraguayan position.

The Conde d'En, on the 14th of August, demanded the surrender of Caballero at Peribebuy, which was refused. An assault was made from three sides simultaneously an hour later. The Paraguayans defended themselves like lions, but were finally overpowered by the numerical superiority of the allies.

The cavalry, under the command of General Menno Barreto, dashed across the northern breastworks, broke through the enemy's lines and cut down most of the Paraguayans. Only about 300 of them cut their way through and escaped to Azcurra.

The Brazilians also suffered fearful losses. General Menno Barreto, one of the most daring and intrepid cavalry leaders of their army, was mortally wounded.

The allies liberated a number of prisoners of war, who, for almost a year, had been compelled by Lopez to labor at his factory and arsenal.

General Caballero, with the wrecks of his army, reached Azcurra the same evening and reported the capture of Peribebuy to Lopez. The Supremo at once issued orders for a retreat to begin the following morning. The garrison of San José had been captured previously and the little army of the Marshal-President at Azcurra amounted only to 3000 men with 15 guns.

The retreat commenced before the dawn of day and women, for want of draught animals, had to draw the gun carriages. It was a toilsome march over hill and dale. Not a moment was allowed for rest, for the 1st Brazilian army corps under José Barreto was close on the heels of the retreating Paraguayans.

Lopez halted and his troops bivouacked shortly after sunset. After a weary march over 22 kilometers of mountain road, they camped on a plain surrounded by swamps and marshes, called Nhuaguassu or Campo Grande, through which flows the Rio Pirebebuy. It was intended to cross this river the next morning and escape into the interior of the country.

But the Brazilians were on hand at daybreak on the morning of the 16th August, and at once opened the battle. The Paraguayans fought with their accustomed bravery and disregard of death and the result of the conflict was doubtful for some time until the allied troops suddenly made their appear-

ance on the Paraguayan right flank. The flying columns of Emilio Mitre and José Auto, in accordance with orders received the evening before, had broken up camp at Atira and put themselves on the march at midnight. Their sudden and unexpected appearance decided the battle.

The Paraguayans retreated across the Rio Peribebuy after having sustained a loss of 500 dead and nine guns. They defended the ford so stubbornly and heroically, that the allies had to desist from crossing the river that day.

Lopez, during the night divided his forces into two divisions. The one, 1700 strong with six guns, under the command of General Caballero, marched eastward and Lopez himself, with 8000 men, drew off in a north-westerly direction. He took no guns with him so that the deep, fresh ruts of the heavy gun-carriages would not lead the enemies on his trail. This stratagem succeeded admirably and the allies lost track of him for a long time.

A large number of prisoners were here liberated by the allies. Lopez had been unable to drag them any farther with him on his headlong flight. The wife and the two little children of Dr. Stuart, resembling living skeletons and unable to speak from sheer exhaustion, were among the number.

The allies crossed the Rio Peribebuy on the 17th of August and followed the trail leading to the north-east. They overtook the Paraguayans at Caguiyurú on the next day and defeated them, whereby General Caballero lost one half of his men and all of his guns. With the rest of his army, punctually obeying the directions of the Marshal-President, he led still farther on his course to the north-east. An Argentine column under Emilio Mitre and a Brazilian division under José Anto followed him in close pursuit.

Caballero crossed the Rio Manduvirá and hurried through the eastern part of the Estero Aguacaty, a vast, swampy, bushy plain of 400 square leagues in extent. After pushing forward 55 kilometers in the direction of San Estanislao, he was overtaken by the allies on the 21st day of August, defeated and the rest of the troops still with him fighting heroically to the last were either cut down or taken prisoner.

Lopez had completely vanished out of sight.

The Conde d'Eu divided his troops into a number of flying columns, which had to race in various directions through the

country to discover the whereabouts of the fugitive Supremo. He himself returned to Asuncion, deposed the Marshal-President and installed a new provisional government, composed of three Paraguayans.

All the prisoners of war in the allied camps were placed at liberty and the Paraguayan legion disbanded so that all could participate in the coming election of members of the legislative assembly.

The new government received money, arms and articles of equipment to organize a little army for the purpose of preserving order. One third of the allied forces by degrees left Paraguay and returned home.

It was impossible to conclude a definitive treaty of peace until the dictator was either death, captured or had left the country. Whilst large in the country, he was still a disturbing element. The allied generals were well aware of the fact, that the personal appearance of Lopez, at any time and place, would be sufficient to cheat them of the fruits of a long, costly and sanguinary war.

The allies, furthermore, were bound by the conditions of the treaty of alliance, not to lay down their arms until Lopez had been made harmless by death, capture or banishment.

The search after the Supremo, for these reasons, was continued with unabated zeal.



On the Aquidabaniguy.



The Rio Aquidabaniguy rises on the western slope of the Cordillera de Amambay and after a run of 200 kilometers empties into Rio Paraguay at 23° 40' south latitude. On a wide clearing near the low, swampy, wood-fringed banks of one of the upper tributaries of this river, scenes of stirring, active life could be witnessed on the 28th day of February 1870.

Groups of half naked Paraguayans, of both sexes, were busily engaged in the preparation of their frugal meals, around a number of small fires. In other parts of the camp, people could be seen engaged in attending their horses and cattle, repairing harness and wagons and in cleaning their guns.

Nine hundred persons, 400 men and 500 women, had camped here in the woods for some days. They rested from a long weary, fatiguing march through wide swamps and dense forests with thorny underbrush, where not a breath of fresh air cooled the suffocating heat and where billions of mosquitoes and flies drove the patient, long-suffering wanderers almost to desperation. They not only rested from the toilsome march but they also tried to recuperate their strength for the toils, privations and sufferings still before them during the coming months.

A large, cloth tent, lined with damask and floors covered with soft carpets, stood in the centre of the camp. It was the present abode of the Marshal-President, Madame Lynch and their children.

Lopez had resolved to take the small remnant of his faithful Guaranis through the wilderness of the Gran Chaco to Bolivia and to accept for the present, the hospitality of the neighbouring republic. This, the Bolivian government would have granted cheerfully, but the resolution, to go there must have sprung from utter despair. The distance between the Rio Aquidabaniguy and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the first town beyond the Bolivian frontier, was 700 kilometers. The route led through trackless swamps, deep marches and dense forests, peopled with tribes of hostile Indians and the Supremo was almost totally divested of the necessary equipment for such a march. His whole train consisted of the family carriage of Madame Lynch, four two-wheeled carts, carrying provisions, ammunition, arms and the archives, and 2 horses, 22 mules and 30 oxen for draught animals. A band of 500 head of slaughter oxen was insufficient for the proposed long and wearisome journey.

But Lopez, nevertheless, persisted in carrying out his resolution.

It was his plan to move northward along the western slopes of the Cordillera de Amambay, to cross the headwaters of

the rivers rising here and flowing into the Rio Paraguay, to turn in a north-westerly direction after passing the Rio Apa, to cross the Rio Paraguay on rafts at Fort Olympo, situated in the Gran Chaco in 21° 2' south latitude, to march through the wilderness of the Gran Chaco along a bridle-path from Corumbá to Santo Cruz de la Sierra, which he had opened in 1867 and to proceed into Bolivia.

It was the purpose of the Marshal-President to break up camp and enter upon the tedious and toilsome march, after two more days of rest.

The sun had disappeared in the west and a dark night descended on forest and plain.

A Brazilian troop of 300 soldiers, at the same time, bivouacked on a grassy plain some twelve leagues to the south of the Paraguayan camp. The chatting and smoking soldiers were lounging on their ponchos, spread on the soft grass around the fires while their horses, staked out with lassos at a short distance from camp, were eagerly cropping the abundant and nutritious grass.

Two squadrons of the Rio Grande do Sul cavalry and 40 infantrymen, belonging to the flying column of General Camara, composed of three regiments of cavalry and one battalion of infantry, camped here for the night.

The general, who, with his adjutant Major José Simeon de Oliveira and Colonel Silva Favares, accompanied this section of his column, sat near a cheerful fire, engaged in conversation with his officers.

Camara had divided his troops into five sections. Four of them were sent out in various directions in search of the fugitive Marshal-President, who, for the last six months, had become absolutely invisible as if the earth had swallowed him.

The Conde d'Eu continued the hunt with undiminishing zeal, as it was of the utmost importance to know, whether or not, Lopez had already abandoned the country. The prestige of this one man in the country was so extraordinary that the allies had to exert themselves to the best of their abilities to destroy it. Only after this had been accomplished could they feel secure that the long, bloody war had not been fought in vain and that the object, aimed at from the beginning, had

been attained. Until then, all the honors and advantages obtained at enormous sacrifices, would be illusory.

It was about nine o'clock, when the sharp call from the mounted, statuesque picket suddenly interrupted the conversation and caused everyone to peer intently into the darkness.

A patrol of troopers, lead by a subaltern, approached at a trot immediately. The corporal, short and of heavy built, dismounted, advanced to the general and reported: that they had discovered the trail of Lopez as, an quarter of an hour ago, they had encountered a deserter, who desired to speak to the general and to give him valuable information in regard to the present whereabouts of the dictator. The deserter, evidently an officer, was awaiting the order of the general to appear before him.

This report caused a great sensation amongst the group of officers.

General Camara ordered the man to be brought:

A young man, in a red blouse with black collar, open in front, and a black, gold-fringed cap on his head, stepped with military salute, into the circle of officers.

«Are you a deserter?» inquired General Camara.

«Yes, my general!» came the response.

«Who are you?»

«My name is Solano Lindo. Until now, I have been a practitioner, (one of those army surgeons, hurriedly trained and equipped by Drs. Stuart and Skinner) in the little crowd which the tyrant Lopez still regards as his army. This morning, before dawn, I left the camp with the purpose, to find the nearest allied troops and to deliver the blood-hound into their hands. I expect no reward. The revenge, which I vowed to heaven, will be partially satisfied when the brutal despot is delivered into the hands of his enemies. If you, my general, are willing to accept my offer, I beg you to follow me with your troops without delay.»

«What induced you to desert?» interrogated, with a faint shade of distrust, the general, «and what is the cause of your sudden hatred of the ex-president?»

«The cause is plain: My father, a man sixty-five years of age and one of the most loyal and faithful adherents of the Supremo, accompanied the latter until now as a captain of ca-

valry. Night before last, he returned to camp, very much depressed, and reported that a Brazilian raiding party had captured fifty head of his horses and that he was able to bring only four horses away with him. Lopez was frantic with rage over the loss, although my father had only three men with him to guard and protect the *tropilla*.* In his anger he ordered my father to be shot. This morning, after a painful farewell from my beloved father, at which I suffered unspeakable anguish, he was led forth to his death. I — — followed him — — to his execution. A minute later, and my parent lay writhing in death agony on the blood-stained soil. A spasmodic faint rattle came from the wide open mouth, where the bloody tongue hung from the white teeth. Despairing and wild with distress, I threw myself on the quivering body. I held his head to my breast and called my shamefully murdered father by the tenderest names — in vain, the staring, broken eyes had not for me one ray of that warm and tender love which he had shewn me all my life.— My tears ceased to flow.— I arose calm and cold. But, at the side of the rigid form of him who had my only love, I solemnly vowed to heaven to have revenge on the murderers, who, for fifty contemptible horses, had murdered like a bandit a man who, for five years and during the whole war, had loyally and faithfully stood by him. — My general, now you know the motive which impelled me to this act of vengeance and you will appreciate it.

Deep silence pervaded the group of the listening officers.

«I understand the cause which prompts you perfectly» responded the general seriously. «Where can we find the ex-president and over how many men does he dispose?

«The tyrant camps twelve leagues to the north-east of this place, on the woody bank of the headwaters of one of the southern tributaries of the Rio Aquidabaniguy!» excitedly replied the deserter. «Lopez intends to proceed on his march to Bolivia the day after to-morrow and it is necessary that you put yourself in motion to night, to surprise him to-morrow. He has 400 men with him, but they will scarcely offer any serious resistance to an unexpected, spirited attack. They believe that the allies have lost all trace of them and, in consequence, are

*)—A small band of horses.

deluted into a fancied security. Two *picades*,* one leading north to the river and the other south to the plain, have been cut through the grove where the tyrants camp is located. The grove must be surrounded in such a manner that the fox will find no way to slip out, and I pledge my head that I will point out to you the proper positions. It is now upon you, my General, to effect this grand capture and to end this unhappy war for ever.»

Camara pondered over the matter in silence for a brief time. Then, although it was now ten o'clock, ordered his troops to break up camp at once. He had resolved to venture the surprise with his small force and not await the arrival of reinforcements from the other detachments.

Within half an hour the fires were extinguished and the troops put themselves on the march to the north-east. The general, with the Paraguayan deserter at his side, led the van.

The grove, in which Lopez with his small band of faithful followers camped, was completely surrounded by the Brazilian troops at noon of the next day, the 1st of March 1870.

Camara had only 20 mounted men and a detachment of 40 infantry with him.

Colonel Silva Tavares received the command to take the 20 troopers and force the southern pikade.

The order was obeyed. The surprise was sudden and swift like a thunderbolt, but the Paraguayans, by their musketry fire, threw back the charging cavalry and began to rally. Then the Brazilian infantry dashed into the camp, bringing disorder and consternation to the Paraguayans who now endeavored to save themselves by flight through the thick woods and the northern pikade.

The disorder in the camp was indescribable. Women with dishevelled hair, screaming and yelling, fled over the opening in all directions, to find protection behind trees from the cavalry which came dashing in from all sides.

Only three Paraguayans, Lopez, General Resquin and Luis Caminos, the former prime minister, were mounted. They drew their sabres and galloped off for the northern pikade. Lopez and Caminos rode the only two horses left in camp while Resquin was mounted on a mule.

*)-- Roads or paths cut through the forest.

A section of Brazilian troopers, led by the deserter Solano Lindo, charged after the three fugitives, discharging their carbines as they rode.

Lopez rode ahead. He looked back at the entrance of the pikade. He had lost his cap, was recognized and the pursuit centred upon him.

He dashed furiously through the pikade and might have escaped, if the ground outside the grove had not been soft, miry and swampy, which compelled him to walk his horse. He spurred his horse to a more rapid gait in a frantic and desperate attempt to save his own person, even if everything else should be lost.

The last of the three riders was Minister Caminos. A bullet from behind crashed through his spine and expiring he sank from his horse.

When General Resquin saw this, he turned his mule to his pursuers, flung his sabre into the thicket and shouted that he would surrender himself.

Lopez, during the time General Resquin was taken to the rear by some troopers, had jumped from his floundering horse and was wading through the creek, hotly pursued by the corporal of the patrol which had captured the deserter Lindo the evening before, and some other soldiers. The Supremo seemed wounded but this did not prevent him from climbing the opposite steep bank. The corporal José, or «little devil» as he was called, with three or four soldiers, waded after him.

General Camora, at this moment, came galloping up, but his horse sank into the mire. He leaped from the saddle, rushed through the stream and shouted: «Disarm him! «Disarm him! But dont kill him!»

The corporal called upon the Marshal-President to surrender.

In response Lopez aimed his revolver at the *cabo* (corporal) but was pierced through the back by a lance in the hand of the latter and fell on his face. He rose again immediately fired at the corporal and wounded him in the shoulder. The lance of the corporal struck the dictator in the breast and he fell forward, with his head into the water.

The pursuers rushed to the place but the earthly career of the Marshal-President had come to an end.

Francisco Solano Lopez, the terror of his enemies, the bloodthirsty tyrant of a noble people, was no more. A plain surgeon had vowed to destroy him and had accomplished his purpose. The lance of the «little devil» had terminated forever a career of glory and of inhuman raging. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

When General Camara had convinced himself of the identity of the fallen men, he had the corpse placed upon a litter made of saplings and carried to the camp of the Paraguayans in the clearing of the grove.

The litter was placed on the ground and surrounded by a strong guard to protect the corps from insults, which the enraged Paraguayans, now giving full vent to their long suppressed hatred, were preparing to wreak upon it.

The sister of Lopez, the widow of the murdered General Barrios, whom the Dictator had dragged with him as a prisoner, so far, was here liberated. Taken to the side of her brothers corpse she looked upon it with an expression of evident abhorrence. Neither the staring, glassy eye nor the rigid features of her brother could force from her heart one symptom of sorrow.

No tear fell for the fallen Supremo — not a sound of compassion could be heard.

But the Paraguayans, who were present, heaped reproaches imprecations and curses upon the monster who had ground them under foot and drove their country to destruction.

Madame Lynch, with her children, had tried to escape in her carriage, but was overtaken and brought back by Lieutenant Cipriano and some cavalry-men. The officer called upon the fourteen year old son of Lopez to surrender, and, turning in his saddle, gave orders to disarm the boy. The young Paraguayan, at that moment, discharged his revolver against the lieutenant, wounding him, whereupon the boy was mortally wounded by a lance-thrust from a Brazilian trooper.

Madame Lynch, in her carriage, was brought before General Camara, who received her with due courtesy. She begged to be permitted to remain in her carriage, which was granted. The general placed a strong guard around the carriage to protect the occupant from the infuriated Paraguayan women, who would have turned the intensely hated foreign wo-

man to pieces. They yelled and shouted that Madame carried a fabulous fortune of gold, jewels and brilliants with her and repeatedly demanded of the Brazilians to confiscate this. The frenzied women could only be made to desist by the free use of the bayonet.

No one was allowed to touch the carriage.

A grave was dug at the place where the damask-lined tent had stood before. The defunct Dictator was buried in it at sunset. A roughly hewn cross marked the final resting place of the Supremo.

The Conde d'Eu sent Major José Simeon de Oliveira, who had participated in the closing act of the war, to Rio de Janeiro, to deliver the sword of the fallen Marshal-President to the Emperor Don Pedro II.

This sword was not made for actual war. It did not look like the sword of a brave warrior determined to sell his life only at a high price. It was a fancy sword. The hilt was of tortoise-shell ornamented with gilded bronze.

Eliza Lynch, a few weeks subsequently, left Paraguay for Buenos Aires, and after a short stay at that capital, returned to France.

The former consort and companion of Francisco Solano Lopez, who had faithfully remained with him until his violent death, resided at Boulogne for many years and finally died in Paris.



Conclusion.



More than twenty-five years passed away since the long bloody drama, in which a brave, noble but ignorant people sacrificed themselves heroically for their cruel oppressor who bound them with iron fetters of servitude.

Only the death of the blood-thirsty despot put an end to the murderous war.

The roar of cannon ceased and the silence of the grave settled over the deserted woods, swamps, marshes and lagoons which had been dumb witness of the fierce struggle of contending armies.

Lopez had the inhuman cruelty of Richard III. and, like him, perished by the avenging lance.

Impelled by a fixed idea, blinded by an uncontrollable ambition and spurred onward by a fatal selfconceit, he drove his country to the verge of destruction and almost caused the extermination of his people, whom he was ordained to lead on the path of progress and civilization.

Yet, notwithstanding his cruelty and his notorious cowardice, when menaced by danger, he possessed brilliant qualities, which forced admiration even from his enemies.

He had uncommon talent and skill to lead and manage the Guaranis *«Independencia o Muerte»* was the leading principle to which he remained faithful, under all circumstances, during the war.

No losses, however severe, no defeat, however disastrous, no situation, however critical could dim the view with which he surveyed the condition. The measures to which he resorted during the war, speak of a high grade of innate strategical talent and were executed with thoroughness, despatch and decision.

He depended only on himself and his genius.

The allies had no general who was at all his equal in the art of war.

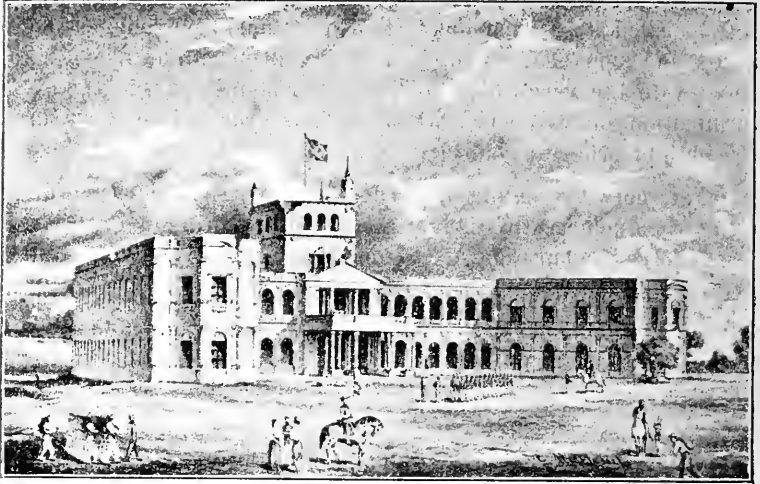
But all his shining qualities were stained and obscured by his brutal tendencies.

History condemns the monstre and hands down to posterity a name soiled with blood and cruelty and covered with infamy.

The frivolous manner with which he provoked the war was a transgression, a wrong, which was followed by a succession of cruelties, inhumanities, and enormities of a neronic character, such as mankind has rarely witnessed in any country and in any age.

Stricken down by the lance of the «little devil» he now rests in a cool grave, in the clearing of a forest, on the slope of the Cordillera de Amambay near the headwaters of the Rio Aquidabaniguy.

May he there rest in peace !



The Government Building in Asuncion, erected by Lopez.



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